

October 17, 2021 - Teddy Tash

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Preacher: Ted Tash

[0:00] We welcome you to the media ministry of Bethel Community Church. Knowing Jesus, making Jesus known. Morning.

I'll tell you a quick Jim Fitzgerald story. Everybody who was around, you know, the St. Louis, I don't know, Fenton Crossing, Bethel, wherever you would run into Jim Fitzgerald for the last 30 years. He had two gospel messages that he would go back to. He had 1 Corinthians 15, Jesus Christ died, he was buried, he rose again. And then he had Lazarus and the rich man.

Those were the two he would always go back to, right? Every time you saw him, he was doing one of those. And I was a little kid. I don't even know how little, but little kid. And he was doing rich man and Lazarus in Sunday school or something like that.

And he talks about, you know, Lazarus dies and he goes to Abraham's bosom, and then the rich man dies, right? And he looks up and he sees Father Abraham and he sees Lazarus there in Abraham's bosom.

[1:04] And I remember one of the other kids raised his hand and said, Mr. Jim, what's a bosom? And so, anyway, that was always a good one. Well, if you turn your Bible to the book of Romans, we're going to continue our study there.

After today, we only have three chapters left. And then we'll be finished with our study in Romans. I think this has been a really good study for me. I don't know about the rest of you guys, but I've really enjoyed our time here in the book of Romans.

And today we're going to finish off, like I said, the last little bit of chapter 13. Romans, you know, is kind of broken up into a couple different sections.

The first part is really a good explanation of the gospel through about chapter 6. And then you've got 6, 7, and 8, which is, you know, kind of on Christian living, that battle between the spirit and the flesh.

And then you have a little bit about Israel, 9, 10, 11. And then you kind of get 12 to the end of the chapter, and it really talks about Christian living. There's a lot to do with just Christian living.

[2:14] As Christians, how should we conduct ourselves on the earth? And so that's kind of where we're at. And, you know, two weeks ago, David Vineyard had those really good verses at the end of chapter 12, which are just good kind of like life verses, kind of good life goal verses, if you will, kind of like a credo almost.

Lydia and I, when we've had the chance to do premarital counseling, we always tell the couples to come up with like a mission statement for their marriage, you know, or a mission statement for their household.

And they always come back with some, you know, love God or something, you know, very, oh, shoot, we forgot to do this. Let's come up with something real quick. But, you know, for a young couple or an older couple or whomever, man, Romans 12, 9 to 15, I mean, it nails it as far as what life is about.

It says, you know, love without hypocrisy, hate what's evil, cling to what's good, be kind to one another, show brotherly love to one another, be diligent, be fervent, serve the Lord. I mean, this is all just good life stuff, you know.

Rejoice, continue steadfast in prayer, give to one another when you have needs, give yourself to hospitality, bless those who persecute you, rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

[3:32] I mean, that's just a great life passage. You know, this Friday we got a new niece, Phoebe, you know, rejoice with those who rejoice. This afternoon we're going to awake, weep with those who weep.

Just good life verses there. Last week, Dave Stow, and I thought he did a really good job of covering the first part of this chapter, talks about how should Christians interact with the government.

As a believer, what should our relationship with the government be like? And I thought he did a very good job explaining that. You know, he talked about taxes. He had a painting business at one point. There was an opportunity to maybe skimp on the taxes a little bit. His conscience convicted him, and he went and he sorted it out. And then that leads right into our chapter today where it says, Owe no one anything except to love one another.

So there's good life verses. And then next week, in 14, it'll talk about how should Christians behave on the debatable things, the gray areas, the Christian liberty areas.

[4:34] Things like alcohol, things like meat sacrifice to idols. And all of that flows from today's message where we're going to talk about loving one another. And I think if you look at next week's passage, Christian liberties, through the lens of loving one another, it really clears things up quite a bit.

You know, Paul in Corinthians, when he talks about Christian liberties, says that knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. And he says there, you know, I'd never eat meat again if it's going to cause my brother to stumble.

So anyway, just really good life verses, kind of Romans 12 through the end. And so we're going to be right in the middle of that today. So like I said, if you'd turn to Romans 13, we'll read 8 through 10, then we'll pray and get into it.

So Romans 13, verse 8 says, Oh, no one anything except to love one another. For he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

For the commandments, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet. And if there is any other commandment, all are summed up in this saying, namely, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

[5:49] Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law. Let's pray. God, we just thank you that we can be here meeting freely in this country.

And thank you that you love us. Thank you that you've given us your word. Lord, I pray that as we look at it today, we would be willing to be challenged a little bit. And Lord, just be receptive to what you have to say.

And just pray you bless our time. Pray all this in Jesus' name. All right, so there in verse 8, it says this. It says that he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

At the very end of verse 10, it says, therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law. That idea, that concept of fulfilling the law, it's kind of an interesting concept.

It's mentioned earlier in Romans. Actually, back in chapter 8, verse 4, it says this. It says that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk according to the spirit.

[7:00] So the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk according to the spirit. So it's kind of an interesting phrase, fulfilling the law.

Well, you know, I've got a two-year-old and a four-year-old, and so the big question around our house is why. Right? Why? Well, because. Well, why? I don't know.

I'm out of ideas. Because. Because. So why? Why is love the fulfillment of the law? Why are those who walk according to the spirit able to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law?

Why? Why is that so? Well, it explains it here in verse 9. It says, The commandments, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not bear fault with false witness, shall not covet, or any other commandment.

You come up with any other one. And they're all summed up with love your neighbor as yourself.

Right? Love your neighbor as yourself. All those other ones fall in line. When Jesus was here, he gave us like the golden rule.

[8:06] He didn't call it the golden rule. We've ascribed the golden rule to it. But it was do to others as you would have them do to you. Right? Any other commandment, doesn't matter what it is, it's all summed up in this.

Love your neighbor as yourself. Because love does no harm to a neighbor, therefore. It is the fulfillment of the law. So pick a commandment.

Is it murder? Let's say murder. That's an easy one. If I love my neighbor, I'm not going to murder them. More than likely. If you love your neighbor, you're not going to steal from them.

Right? I've been stolen from two different times in my life. Not real fun. You feel kind of violated.

And so if I love my neighbor, I'm not going to steal from them. You're not going to lie to them. You're not going to covet their things.

You're not going to commit adultery. Everything is summed up by love. Does that make sense?

Love is the fulfillment of the law. Well, so why then, the second why, back from chapter 8, can we not do this in the flesh?

[9:09] Why is that something that we can't fulfill in the flesh? And my response to that would be another question. Is could you ever fulfill the law in the flesh? And the answer is obviously not. Right?

The law can never be fulfilled by the flesh. The point of the law was to point us to Christ. It was a tutor to bring us to Christ. It was a tutor to show us our sins, show us our guilt, and say, hey, you need a Savior.

So in the flesh, we can never fulfill the law. But it says those of us who are in the Spirit, that righteous requirement is met. Well, why is that?

Well, what's the first fruit of the Spirit? Right? Go to that list in Galatians 5. The fruits are love and then all the rest. Right? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

That is the fruit of the Spirit. And so when you're living a life that is being led by the Spirit, and you go back to that battle in chapter 6 through 8, flesh and spirit, tug of war, when you're walking with the Lord and you're living in the Spirit, the fruit of that will be love.

[10:13] And it's interesting, if you get to the end of Galatians 5, 22 and 23, where it gives all the fruits of the Spirit, the last little phrase in there, it is, Against these things, talking about love, joy, peace, patience, all the way through, against these things, there is no law.

That's kind of a cool little phrase. So loving one another is the fulfillment of the law because all of the commandments are summed up in that saying, Love your neighbor as yourself.

So that's kind of an interesting thought, loving your neighbor. You know, practically speaking, how do we do that? How do we love our neighbors? You know, Lydia and I, more so Lydia than me, but has baked some Christmas cookies each year and given them out to our neighbors.

Okay, that's a once-a-year event. How else do we love them? You know, Robert, I think it was Robert Frost, had a poem, Good Neighbors Make Good Fences.

And basically, the one neighbor on the one side of the fence wants a relationship. The other neighbor on the other side of the fence really doesn't, and he just keeps muttering this line to himself, you know, Good Neighbors Make Good Fences. Basically, if I just do my duties over here and I don't bother you, then I'm a good neighbor.

[11:30] And the other neighbor's saying, man, I want to be friends with you. I want a relationship. So is that how you do it? Is it upkeep? Is that how you love your neighbor? And you know, honestly, I don't know that I have a good answer for this.

It's somewhat a legitimate question. How do you love your neighbor? I'll give you a real-life example. Our neighbors behind us are Kurdish.

They speak zero English. The family that was there before them was also Kurdish. They're like nephews or something or another. They sold the house to these people. Don't know them at all.

Literally zero English. No clue. So that's behind us. Behind us and to the right, our fence is touched like in the corner. They're Asian of some kind.

I think they're Cambodian. Zero English as well. They're hardcore. They have like a shed with live chickens and rabbits in them and they'll let them run around a little bit. But then one day they're not there anymore and they have a big fire and they're like cooking the stuff.

[12:30] I mean, they're hardcore. So how do you love these people? On the other side, they're African refugees. We live in Afton, by the way. They've been here for like 20 years.

They speak good English. They're Catholic. They came over because a missile struck their house and killed their whole family. And they came over. And we have an okay relationship with them. You know, we'll give them some stuff out of our garden.

When the girls were born, they gave them diapers and blankets and stuff. So we have an okay relationship there. Across from us and down a house is Miss Mitchell. She's like 90.

I shoveled her driveway for three years. And Miss Mitchell never told me thanks one time. And this year I said, you know what? I'm not doing Miss Mitchell's driveway. She's never told me thanks. And I thought now I should do it.

So I did it. And then she bought me a \$50 Snooks gift card. So she's got herself another three years worth of shoveling. But here's where I'm going with this.

[13:27] Right across the street. And this is an interesting conversation. Right across the street. You walk out my door, go across the street, go up the driveway, knock on the door. My neighbor there is homosexual.

His name is not Steve, but we'll call him Steve. And right across the street, there's my gay neighbor. Gay Steve. How do you love him? As a believer, as a believer in Christ, we're told to love our neighbor as ourself.

How do you love on that? That's a hard question for somebody that grew up in the church and has been poured into my whole life. I don't know that I have a good answer to that. How do you love your neighbor?

The phrase that comes to mind for me when you're dealing with a sin like that, a sinful lifestyle like that, is that God loves the sinner, right?

But he hates the sin. So, you know, across the street conversation, how am I supposed to communicate that? You know, hey Steve, how are you doing? You doing good? Okay, yeah. You know, I just want to know that, I want you to know God loves you and I love you.

[14:37] You know, that lifestyle that you identify and have given your whole life to, he hates that, I hate that, hate everything about it. It's, you know, something that we don't care for at all.

But we love you, man. Hope you have a good one. Right? I mean, that's kind of harsh, right? And certainly, in love, the truth does need to be told.

You know, hey, the lifestyle that you've chosen is, you know, we consider that to be sinful. And look, man, all have sinned. I've told lies.

I've had lust. It doesn't matter. We're all sinners. And God loves all of us. I mean, that's maybe a little bit of a nicer conversation. But, you know, how do you do it?

I think maybe one way is saying, hey, man, you know, you're doing okay? No, like, really, are you doing okay? Because I've read the studies and, you know, gay men are like three times more likely to be depressed.

[15:32] And suicide is the leading cause of death for young homosexual males. Like, are you doing good? Because I'm here if you ever want to talk, man. I've had anxiety, too. You know, I was hospitalized in college with anxiety.

And I've found that, you know, having a good relationship with God has really been helpful to me. You know, maybe that's the route you go. I don't know. But you think about loving your neighbor. I know it's an interesting conversation.

I told Lydia as I was getting in the shower this morning, I said I might rattle a few cages today. We'll see. You guys familiar with an exit interview, the concept of an exit interview?

You leave a company, the company sits you down and says, hey, you know, we'd like to know what your experience was like here. That way we can learn from your experience. And we can, you know, we can maybe change our ways, maybe learn a thing.

Was it you? Was it us? Why did you leave? That sort of thing. I was talking with a believer who still loves Bethel, still has no hard feelings at all against Bethel.

[16:40] But used to come here, doesn't anymore. There's no bad blood whatsoever. Zero bad blood whatsoever. So I preface what I'm going to say with that. Very friendly with all of us here, has no bad blood at all.

But used to go here, doesn't anymore. And we weren't even talking about Bethel. We were talking about something else. But this phrase came up, this thing he said came up, I don't know, probably two months ago or so.

And it kind of hit me, and I've thought a lot about it since then, on this topic of loving one another. And this is what he said. He said that we prioritize, and his perception is that we might prioritize doctrine over loving one another.

And I thought, okay, that's a little bit of a gut punch, you know, when somebody says any kind of criticism to you, just in general. But that we here prioritize doctrine over loving one another.

And I thought, okay. And my thought is, well, can you overemphasize doctrine? I mean, doctrine is pretty darn important, right? I mean, if the foundation, which is our doctrine, is bad, the whole rest of the church would be bad, right?

[17:49] So, I mean, doctrine certainly is very, very important. You know, things like God created the earth. All of man is sinful. That Jesus Christ died, he was buried, and he rose again.

That salvation is by grace through faith. I mean, these are the tenets, the pillars, the foundation of what we believe. Yeah, that's certainly very, very important.

But you go, you know, to Corinthians 13, which is a familiar passage. You don't have to turn there. But Corinthians 13, Paul says this.

He says, If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

[18:47] And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. It's kind of interesting, you know.

It seems like no matter what you do, if you don't have love, it's, what's the point, right? I've thought about that foundation example.

You know, doctrine is certainly the foundation of everything. Everything is built off of that, and that is extremely important. But let's say I built a house. Maybe it was out in the mountains. I like the mountains quite a bit.

Let's say I built a house out in the mountains. I called you up and said, Hey, come on out to the house, man. It's beautiful. It just got finished. Three stories. We've got a great view. So you buy your plane ticket.

You fly out there. You get your little rent-a-car. You drive up to the house. And all of it is just three stories of just solid concrete. No doors, no windows, no view. Just big old foundation.

[19:49] You're like, man, Teddy, I knew you were a little off, but I didn't realize it was clinical, you know. Foundation is super important.

Don't, do not mishear me here. The foundation is incredibly important, but there's a lot more to a church than just doctrine. And it comes from loving one another.

You know, our mission statement, our mission statement here at Bethel is knowing Jesus, making Jesus known. That's kind of our little saying. It's knowing Jesus, making Jesus known.

And so every Sunday we get up out of our beds, we come here, we spend three hours here on Jesus' behalf, for the sake of Jesus, to worship him, to know him better, to proclaim him.

He's the guy. He is the reason. So let's listen to what he has to say. Okay, in John 13, if you want to go ahead and turn there, you can. John 13.

[20:53] This is in the upper room. This is at the Last Supper. That's where they all sat at the big, long table and took the picture. I'm glad you got that.

He's getting ready to die, right? I mean, Judas is getting ready to betray him. He's getting ready to be handed over. To be killed. He's kind of given his final set of instructions to his disciples that are

in there with him.

It's him and the guys. And it's interesting, you know, the plan of salvation that God has was Jesus to die, Jesus to be buried. He rose again, hung out for a little while afterwards, ran into a couple people afterwards.

But then he leaves, right? He goes back up to heaven. And it's really this very small group of people are entrusted with the gospel. I mean, this very small group of people God trusts to perpetuate the gospel for the rest.

I mean, for 2,000 years, here we are, right? I mean, it's crazy that that was God's plan. It's a very dangerous plan, you know. But this is what he says. Verse 33.

[21:56] John 13. He says, And so he's saying, look, I'm getting ready to leave.

I'm going to be handed over. I'm going to die. Where I am going, you can't go. We are going to be separated. I'm going to ascend back to my Father in heaven. I'm not going to be with you anymore. Here is what I want you to do.

A new saying I say to you. Verse 33. A new commandment I give to you. This is what Jesus wants us to do. His parting words. That you love one another.

As I have loved you, that you also love one another. That's the command Jesus gives us. He says, this is the new thing I want you to do.

Love one another. As I have loved you, you also love one another. So if you want to know what Jesus wants, and you want to know Jesus, love one another. Then the second part of our mission statement.

[23:02] Making Jesus known. Verse 35. By this, all will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. You know, with our mission statement being what it is, I mean, these should almost be like our church's verses right here.

A new commandment I give you. Love one another. As I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this, all will know that you are my disciples. If you have love for one another.

You know, our church is at an interesting spot. The people who sort of founded Bethel are getting a little older. They're not old, but they are getting older. And we have a lot of young families here.

Myself, I consider myself in the young group still. You know, Brad and Jordan and Will and Courtney and Paul and Denise. We've got lots of young folks here. I think it is important that we love on one another.

Extremely important. In fact, that might even be like the thing that we need to do is love on one another. You know, life is hard for all of us, whether it's career stuff, whether it's issues with your parents that you never dealt with.

[24:16] You know, whatever it is. Raising kids. Man, we have such a good opportunity to love on one another and to get into the weeds with one another in each other's lives.

And say, man, like, how are you really doing? You know, it is so easy. You know, how's work? Oh, it's fine. Maybe it's not fine. You know, maybe it's not. More than likely, it's not.

Right? Man, we have just such a good opportunity. And it's what Jesus wants us to do. Love one another. Love one another. And it's a great way to show the world the Lord Jesus Christ is by our love for one another.

So that's the first three verses, 8, 9, and 10. If you go back to Romans 13, I've got four other verses here that we'll cover real quick.

And there's kind of a four little part, four little points that will help you remember what these four verses have to say. But let's go to verse 11.

[25:21] Excuse me. And we'll read 11 through 14. It says this. Do this. Again, talking about just Christian living here, just in general. How do we as believers live? Do this. Do this.

Knowing the time. Knowing the time. That now. It is high time. It says this. It says this. For now. For now. Our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

The night is far spent. The day is at hand. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts. You know, we were talking about the end of Romans 12.

There being kind of a good credo life verses. I think these verses are very good as well. You know, if you're looking for something to make, you know, your own personal mission statement or something.

[26:25] I think these verses are really good. There's kind of a four part message to them. Real easy to remember. The first one comes from verse 11. It says, knowing the time that now is high time to awake out of sleep.

So the first one would be, wake up. Now is the time. When should you do it? Right now. It is high time to awake up out of sleep. Does anybody know who T.D. Jakes is?

He's a pastor. Your homework would be to go home and get on YouTube. Type in T.D. Jakes, wake up. And you will have a good chuckle at that.

That's all I'll say. Just type in T.D. Jakes, wake up. You'll find his interpretation of this verse. But do it now. Now is the time to do it. Wake up. Pay attention. Now is the time.

Verse 12, it says, Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness. I would say clean up. It is time to clean it up. Cast off the works of darkness. The sin that you are dealing with.

[27:27] The sin that you enjoy. Whatever part of the flesh you enjoy the most. Clean that up. Cast off the works of darkness. The sin that Jesus died for. Cast that off.

We're done with that. Put on the armor of light. So clean up and then dress up. We're going to put on the armor of light. You know in Ephesians 6 it talks about the armor of God.

The last part of the armor of God is the sword. Right? The sword of the spirit. Which it says is the word of God. So wake up.

Do it now. Clean up. Dress up. Get in the word of God. And then finally grow up. It says walk properly. Grow up. We're not going to walk in revelry and drunkenness anymore.

Not in lewdness. Not in strife. Not in envy. Grow up. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts. So you know if you're a young believer or even if you're an old believer.

[28:31] My challenge from these verses to you would be to cast off that part of the flesh that you struggle with. Clean it up. Dress up. Put on the word of God. Or on the armor of God which includes reading this book.

And then grow up into Christ. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Make no provision for the flesh. If the musicians want to come on up. My closing challenge to you would be from this passage is to have love for one another.

Whether that's believers in the church. I think it's very clear that we are to love one another in the church. And to love those who are outside the church. Your neighbor. So let's have love for one another.

Let's put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's go ahead and pray. Father God just thank you for your word. Thank you that you love us.

Thank you that you've given us your word Lord to guide us. No matter how much life I go through I see just more and more how your word is true. And Lord we are certainly in times where truth is under attack just in general.

[29:37] It's hard to even tell what is true anymore. But Lord we know that your word is truth and we thank you for that. Thank you that it can be our compass as we navigate life. Lord I pray for this church.

I pray Lord that we would focus on doctrine. Lord it's certainly important. But we would also have love for one another. Because Lord we know without love we are nothing. So God that would be my prayer for this church.

That we would grow and that we would have success Lord. But that we would love you and love others. We pray all these things in Jesus name.