

Clothe Yourselves with Jesus

Mike Shultz

Romans 13:8-14

September 6, 2026

8 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. 9 The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not covet,” and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

11 And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. 12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. 14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

What is a true definition of love? We have many views on it. You can look in the Greek and find various forms of love. You have a love that is involved with how we treat our friends. We

have a love that we feel for our children. We have a love that we feel for our spouses. We have an understanding of unconditional love. This is the love that people believe they truly get in our modern world. Unconditional love to the modern world means that whatever someone does should be approved and accepted no questions asked or else you have no real love for the person. They see correction as hateful. However, Scripture tells us that God disciplines because He loves us as a father loves his child. Without correction, there is no genuine love. Love contains honesty even if it hurts someone's feelings. Love contains thinking about the soul of someone else and where they will end up when they leave this world behind. Love means being willing to flip the tables like Jesus did if necessary to get Jesus to these people who have rejected Him. Love means pointing out when someone is following a false prophet or a false "Jesus." Love means stepping up against evil. We can each have our own idea of what is considered evil, but I think that Scripture tells us what evil is as long as we don't decide to rewrite it or reject parts of it that we don't like. Now that we have that understanding, let's dive back into our verses for today.

8 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. To me, unconditional love can be defined as loving someone even though they are doing something stupid. We don't owe anyone our soul. We don't owe anyone our entire

time. We don't owe anyone everything we own. People are not entitled to anything except our love. We should always have love that we can give out. If we owe someone money back, then we should pay it so that it is not something that holds us back. If we owe someone an apology, then we should give it so that it doesn't hold us down. If we owe forgiveness, then we should give it so that the person has no power over us. If people have power over us, then we can't give our all to God who truly deserves it.

How does love "fulfill the law?" The commentary gives this explanation. "Love, as defined by the Bible, will never cause a person to break any of God's laws nor to influence anyone else to do so."¹ If we love someone, then we will not guide them away from Christ. If we love someone, then we will pray for them. We will want them to draw closer and closer to God. We will tell them when they do something that God doesn't approve of with Scripture to back it up. If we just ignore Scripture, then we ignore the voice of God because that is His Word given to us to know Him.

9 The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. There is major significance placed upon loving our

¹ Accordance App, Complete Biblical Library

neighbor as ourselves. This is true. What does this mean? Does this mean that we only see the good and ignore the bad?

Sometimes. However, if that bad is being celebrated and then the person says that God is going to turn a blind eye to that sin because “God is love.” People talk about the love of God, but refuse to acknowledge the judgment of God, until they want to say that we are not supposed to judge each other. That is when they want to say that “God is the final judge.” When you tell them that God has already cast judgment upon something, then “we must be misunderstanding the Scripture.”

11 And to do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

“Paul emphasized the need for believers to do everything in the light of the uncertainty of life and the certainty of eternity.”² I think that Paul gets a bad rap. I have heard that people make claims that we worship Paul instead of Jesus. I have heard people say that Paul was out for himself. I have heard that Paul hates women. I have heard so many complaints against Paul. However, Paul would be the first to tell you that he was far from perfect. He called himself one of the worst in the way of sinners. He knew that there was so much work to be done upon himself, but he is willing to give credit to Jesus for what all has already transpired. He was assured of where he was going when he would pass from this life. He wants us to have

² Accordance App, The Complete Biblical Library

that same hope when we die. He tells us that we should be prepared to remove all the evil from our hearts if it means that we put Jesus first because it will be worth it. We can't just sleep through this life. We must stay alert of every time that God speaks or wants to put us to work. We never know when Jesus will return and we must be ready. If we aren't aware of His return or ready for it, then we may be left behind.

12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

The deeds of darkness are the many ways that we live defined by pleasure instead of defined by His ruling. If we live by money, we live in darkness. If we live by sex, we live in darkness. If we live in our career before our family, we live in darkness. If we live by seeking attention and praise of others, we live in darkness. It is only when we seek His ways and His attention that we can live in the light. It is only when we clothe ourselves with Jesus and see Him as enough that we can ever truly be in the light. We must stop living life by what we want and what makes us feel good, and instead we must live by His guidance. We must read His Word to understand that that consists of. We must stop closing our eyes to the pain and mental health crisis that surrounds us. We must stop deciding that the fate of this world is someone else's responsibility. We must stop choosing comfort over salvation. We must truly live as close to Christ as we can because we never know if that will be the difference for someone else to finally know who Jesus is,

or even worse, if we were the only Jesus they see. If they see the worst in us, and see that as Jesus, then that would be a terrible Jesus for them to follow.

13 Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. All sins are evil, but sins of a sexual nature take on another level. We have sins that separate us from God, but then there are sins that both harm the body and draw us away from God. We have always heard that no sin is worse than any other, and to an extent that is true. We all have sin. We are all broken. We all do things that God would disapprove of. However, when sexual sin enters in, then we not only damage what our relationship with God currently is, but we can damage what it could be in the future. If we live to an unhealthy lifestyle, then we take time away from our body, therefore our very life, which means that we have less time to get things right with God. Don't risk it. Essentially, don't be stupid with what God gave you.

14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh. Jesus died for us. He decided to love us enough to willingly give Himself up so that we could attain salvation. He offered us a free gift. If you are here, then you have most likely decided to already have accepted that gift or are currently looking further into this gift to decide to accept it later. If you have accepted His gift, then you have a responsibility to not waste it. If you

have not accepted it, then I pray that you do receive it before it is too late. The altar is open if you want to know more about Him, then there are plenty of us here willing to talk and walk with you. We will never know everything. We are all equal at the foot of the cross. Are you willing to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Him?