

## ***A Simple Christian Ethic that Works in All Situations***

*Romans 13:8-14*

**Main Idea:** We live in a culture where people seem confused about even the most basic ethical decisions. But in this passage, Paul gives us a clear moral ethic that acts like a compass, providing a pattern for treating people in any situation. *There are three components to this ethic...*

### **1. *WE MAKE A LIFESTYLE DECISION – We decide to take our responsibilities in the world seriously. Romans 13:8a***

- A. Context – Romans 11-13 is divided into three sections.
  - 1. Romans 11:33—12:2 addresses our relationship with God: living sacrifice.
  - 2. Romans 12:3-21 addresses our relationship within the body of Christ: service & love.
  - 3. Romans 13:1-14 addresses our relationships within the world: submission & love.
- B. Correlation – Rom. 13:8-14 is similar to 1 Pet. 2:11.
- C. Direction – The passage moves us to make a lifestyle choice about how we live in the world.

### **2. *WE EXPRESS LOVE – We consistently fulfill Jesus’ Great Commandment. Romans 13:8b-10***

- A. The Great Commandment is a central theme in the teaching of Jesus. Mark 12:28-33
  - 1. A lawyer asks Jesus about the greatest commandment. 12:28
  - 2. Jesus issues the *Great Commandment*. 12:29-31
  - 3. The *Great Commandment* deals with God. 12:29-30; Deut. 6:4
  - 4. The *Great Commandment* deals with others, our neighbor. 12:31a
  - 5. The *Great Commandment* deals with self. *Think about the Golden Rule*. 12:31b
  - 6. We would say that this is the ultimate ethic.
- B. The Great Commandment is rooted in the Old Testament Law.
  - 1. The Ten Commandments had two tablets.
  - 2. Tablet one was about loving God. Tablet two was about loving people.
  - 3. And the last commandment (number 10) addresses self.
- C. The Great Commandment provides us with an obligation.
  - 1. Positively: Owe love to people in society.
  - 2. Negatively: Do no wrong.
  - 3. Result: We fulfill the heart of God’s moral law.
- D. The Great Commandment suggests an expectation and an application.
  - 1. Expectation: The GC will show forth Christ, because morality flows from God.
  - 2. Application: We must see people with the eyes of Christ.

### **3. *WE MODEL CHRIST – We show forth the person of Jesus with a sense of urgency. Romans 13:11-14***

- A. The command – Wake up from sleeping. 13:11-12a (Eph. 5:14)
  - 1. Assumed action: This sleep is the sleep of mindless moral carelessness.
  - 2. Why change: Our entry into heaven (or Jesus’ return) is very near.
  - 3. The urgency: The night is far spent. Day is coming.
- B. First application: Negatively, we put something off. 13:12b; 13b
  - 1. In the general command he says “lay aside deeds of darkness.”
  - 2. In the specific command he addresses three couplets: partying, sexuality, division.
- C. Second application: Positively we put something on. 13:12c; 14
  - 1. We put on armor of warfare (armor of light). 13:12c
  - 2. We put on Christ (make no provision for the flesh). 13:14