

## *The Debt of Love*

### *Romans 13:8-14*

*For Paul, love embodied the highest ideals of the new kingdom, which Jesus will establish and enforce upon His return to Earth. At that time, God's original created order will be restored. In the meantime, the apostle desired that all believers become living examples of his new kingdom. Just like in the beginning, before the Fall, people are to be righteous because he is righteous. They are to love one another because he is love. They are to live according to the truth because God is truth. As we are transformed to fulfill God's original vision for creation, the world should be transformed—even if only a little—because of our influence. Swindoll*

- I. Our expression of God's agape love toward believers and non-believers alike is of high importance to the Lord. It is a perpetual responsibility we carry both before God and each other. The moral nature of his love is absolutely essential in keeping those whom God has brought into our lives from emotional, spiritual and physical harm. It must be a genuine part of our character if we are to call ourselves disciples of Jesus Christ.

Rom. 13:8-10

Rom. 12:9-13

Luke 10:29-35

Lev. 19:18

Matt. 22:39

Gal. 6:7

Matt. 5:21-22

**John 13:34-35** *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

- II. A lack of concern over what it means to express God's agape love toward others signifies an ignorance toward the seriousness of the times we are living in as we wait for Jesus' return. It speaks of a shallow faith that is more concerned with self, than with what it means to bring spiritual health into our hearts and the hearts of others as his representatives here on earth.

Rom. 13:11-15

Gal. 6:8

- A. Because Jesus' return is imminent, we must guard ourselves against becoming apathetic and listless toward holiness and living the Word. The minute we do, we allow Satan to gain a foothold (**Eph. 4:27**) in our lives that will draw us more and more into the darkness of our sin nature, and less and less into the presence of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Rom. 13:11-13

Matt. 16:1-3

Gal. 1:3-5

1 Jn. 5:18-20

Hosea 10:12

James 5:8

Eph. 5:8

**1 Thess. 5:5** *You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.*

- B. We put on Christ's himself as an inseparable part of our lives when we he saved us from our sins by his shed blood on the cross. Our responsibility is to make sure we remain clothed with his unsoiled attributes while avoiding at all costs the soiled clothing of our sinful nature.

Rom. 13:14

Gal. 3:26-27

**Gal. 5:16** *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*

*"Putting on Christ is a strong and vivid metaphor. It means more than put on the character of the Lord Jesus Christ, signifying rather Let Jesus Christ Himself be the armor that you wear." (Morris)*