

The School of Biblical Law

Introduction to Law and Grace

Lesson Twenty-Eight: "The Law: God's Definition of Love"

The biblical definition of love must be derived from within the pages of scripture. Love is a communicable attribute of God, which means man also partakes of that attribute. Man is commanded to exercise love toward both his God and his fellow man. Jesus said, "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt. 22:37-39). The definition of love is expounded upon in the Law.

1. Jesus described his view of the law when he declared: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill (*pleroo*). For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled (*ginomai*). Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:17-19).

Fulfill (Strong's #4137) is the Greek word *pleroo*, which means to make full, complete, level up or to finish.

Fulfilled (Strong's #1096) is the Greek word *ginomai*, which is a prolonged form of to be and means to arise, come to pass, be done, or become.

You cannot get the full message of the law without love, and you cannot get the full message of love without the law.

2. I Timothy 1:5 states, "Now the end (*telos*) of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned."

End (Strong's #5056) is the Greek word *telos*, which means to set out for a definite point or goal, the point aimed at as the limit, the purpose.

End as it means the finish or the consummation is the Greek word *sunteleo* (Stron's # 4930).

The point at which the law is aiming is love that flows from pure heart (unadulterated, unmixed, without folds), a good conscience (beneficial thoughts that are both in our conscience and subconscious mind), and faith unfeigned (without hypocrisy, sincere, undisguised).

3. Romans 13:8-10 declares, "Owe no man anything but to love one another, for he that loveth hath fulfilled (*pleroo*) the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling (*pleroma*) of the law."

All the law can be comprehended (summed up, gathered together in one) in the saying, "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

John Murray states, The summary does not obliterate or abrogate the expansion of which it is a summary" (Murray, *Principles of Conduct*, p. 192).

Jesus' admonition to love in Matthew 22 is in the context of the law. "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (verse 40). The commandments fit into two categories that express loving and law-keeping deeds toward God and thy neighbor. Law and love are not opposing concepts within the pages of scripture and must remain a cohesive whole for the New Testament believer.