

Sermon on Romans 13:8 to end

Sunday September 6th 2020

How many of the 10 commandments can you name? Does anyone think they can remember all 10?

No other Gods

No idols

Keep the sabbath

Honour your parents

Don't murder

Don't commit adultery

Don't steal

Don't lie

Don't covet

These were the laws that everyone had to live by in the Old Testament and the Israelites added a whole lot more which made it even more impossible not to break them. And they are pretty much the laws by which we have to live today, and we have added a whole lot more and we find it impossible not to break them. Hands up anyone here who has never in their whole life told a lie? And we might not have murdered anyone, but Jesus made it a whole lot harder when he said, if you even think about murdering someone, it is as bad as if you had done it!

God said that after Jesus had died and risen again and gone back to be with Him, He would write His laws on our hearts. So we know inside what is right and what is wrong. We know what will please God and what will upset Him. And we know we can always say sorry when we get things wrong and He will forgive us and make us good again.

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Jesus also made it all very simple because He told us that all the laws, all the rules, everything that we should do or not do can be summed up in just two laws. What is the first one? What is the second one?

Of course it is all about love, because God is all about love. So if we love Him, we will want to please Him and if we love ourselves and other people we won't want to do anything that might hurt us or hurt them. So we don't steal things because that isn't a loving thing to do. We wear our face masks and keep our distance from people because it is a loving thing to try and protect people. It really is very simple. In fact Saint Augustine said it is as simple as this, "love God and do whatever you want". Because of you love God you will want to please Him by being loving.

Now this all sounds lovely but St Paul tells us that it is very urgent that we get on with God's work. We don't know how much time we have and we can't afford to be complacent. We easily fall in to bad habits, and forget to be actively, deliberately loving all the time. So he tells us to put on the armour of light, to put on Jesus, wrap Jesus around us. Well what on earth does that mean? Well it means that we are soldiers in God's army of love. Jesus is the light of the world, He brings the light of His goodness to dark places and our armour, our protection against bad things is the light of His goodness. And wrapping ourselves with Jesus means deliberately taking His nature, being like Him. Some people do this by reading their bible every morning and praying that the character of Jesus will surround them, protect them and be the thing that people will see when they meet them. We all need to ask Jesus to make us more like Him every day to make us more good and more loving everyday. It is really that simple, yet how often do we forget. I challenge you all to pray this simple prayer every morning. Please Jesus, surround me, protect me and make me more like you today.