

Love your Neighbor & Know the Time!

I. Announce:

A. **Slide#1** Baptism Pics on Web main page. - [Pray for Jeff Stiff, Cambodia, 3rd service]

II. Slide#2 Intro:

A. **A great monarch** was accustomed on certain set occasions to entertain all the **beggars of the city**. Around him were placed **his courtiers**, all clothed in rich apparel; the beggars sat at the same table in their rags of poverty. Now it came to pass, that on a certain day, **one of the courtiers** had **spoiled his silken apparel**, so that he dared not put it on, and he felt, "I cannot go to the king's feast today, for my robe is foul." He sat weeping until the thought struck him, "Tomorrow when the king holds his feast, some will come as courtiers happily decked in their beautiful array, but others will come and be made quite as welcome who will be dressed in rags. Well," said he, "**so long as I may see the king's face and sit at the royal table, I will enter among the beggars.**" So without mourning because he had lost his silken habit, he put on the rags of a beggar, and he saw the king's face as well as if he had worn his scarlet and fine linen.

1. Haven't you done this many times, when the evidences of your salvation has been dim? - *If you cannot come to Jesus as a **saint**, come as a **sinner**; only **do come!***

III. Slide#3 LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR! (8-10)

A. This section of scripture is **not** dealing with **finances**.

1. Some have interpreted this verse to mean Christians should **never borrow money** (not for mortgages, car loans, not for anything).
2. Jesus wasn't against borrowing, **Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.** Mt.5:42
3. **Granted we have rampant credit abuse in our culture today.**
 - a) Easy credit, constant advertising, living above our means, & living on the assumption "*I'll make more money in the future, therefore I'll buy on credit now, & pay later!*" (Yes you will!)

B. **Owe** = verb means "*don't continue owing*".

1. NIV nails it, "**Let no debt remain outstanding,**"
2. So it's not saying don't borrow, but "**never leave your debts unpaid!**"
3. **Obviously paying cash is optimal!** - It frees us from all the warnings of debt in Proverbs.
4. The wealthiest man who ever lived said regarding finances, **The rich rules over the poor, And the borrower is servant to the lender.** Prov.22:7

¹ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, The Quotable Spurgeon, (Wheaton: Harold Shaw Publishers, Inc, 1990) [End is modified]

- C. What is the single most guiding principle that should control the Christians life in society? Love!
- D. **Slide#4 Outline:** *The Debt of Love; The command to Love; The release of Love.*
- E. **Slide#5 THE DEBT OF LOVE!** (8)
- F. I think we have all longed to pay off some **debt** [An automobile, a mortgage, college bills, a loan]
1. Here Paul names **a perpetual debt** you'll **never pay off this side of heaven!**
 2. This is **an obligation to love** which has no limits, which can **never be paid off!**
- G. We can never say, *"I have done all the loving I need to do!"*
- H. It is **the Christian's way of life**; we're never done loving!
1. Real love extends to Christians, non-Christians, rich & poor, people of every color, nationality, age, & those of different sexual orientation.
 - a) **No**, not approve the sin, **but** still love the sinner!
- I. **Slide#6 THE COMMAND TO LOVE!** (9)
- J. Love for **God** & love for your **neighbor** is *the highest motive for obedience!*
1. Also, it has been God's plan from the beginning.
- K. Love does what is **right & just**, & seeks **the best** for others.
- L. **By nature, we don't have this kind of love: For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.** Titus 3:3
1. **How do we get this kind of love then?** The Lord gives it to us!
 - a) **The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.** Rom.5:5
- M. When we truly love others, we place **their needs** before **our desires**.
1. **Slide#7 Vs.9,10 msg** When you **love** others, you complete what the law has been after all along. The law code - don't sleep with another person's spouse, don't take someone's life, don't take what isn't yours, don't always be wanting what you don't have, and any other "don't" you can think of - finally adds up to this: **Love** other people as well as you do yourself. You can't go wrong when you **love others**. When you add up everything in the law code, the sum total is **love**.
 2. James called it the **Royal Law!** If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. (2:8)
- N. **Slide#8 THE RELEASE OF LOVE!** (10)
- O. Love isn't the **end** of the Law, but the **fulfillment** of it!

1. Because **love & law** need each other! – *Love needs law for direction, while law needs love for its inspiration!*

P. **Slide#9** So, what are the **3 Love Principles** to live by?

1. Understand your **outstanding debt** to **love others!**
2. **Slide#9b** Only **one command** fulfills the law, the command to **love all people!**
3. **Slide#9c** We can only show **real love** with **God's help!**

Q. **Questions:**²

1. **What does your personal love-debt look like?**
 - a) Have you been keeping up your payments?
 - b) Have you been making love-deposits into the **emotional bank accounts** of those you hold dear?
2. **How are you doing in the area of loving your:** Spouse? Children?
 - a) How about your: Parents? Grandparents? Siblings? Relatives? Friends?
 - b) How about: Strangers? Unbelievers?
3. **Do you feel a sense of accomplishment, or a little convicted?**
 - a) How can you do a better job at filling up others **emotional love-tank** this week?

IV. **Slide#10 KNOWING THE TIME! (11-14)**

A. **Slide#11 What time is it?**

1. The Bible divides time into only **2 categories...this age & the age to come.**

B. **We are obsessed with time!** – It is the very 1st cognitive thought in our mind every morning! (What time is it?)

1. **Ever count the number of clocks you have in your house?** (I counted 36 last night in mine)
2. **Think of your Kitchen:** coffee makers, oven, microwave. [Cell Phones, laptops, decorative, DVD players, every bedroom; landscape timer; watches...xtra watches]

C. **We are fixated with time!** – **But are we measuring time correctly?**

1. We seem to be most concerned with **what time is it now?**
2. God seems to be more concerned with **what time is drawing near!**
 - a) Jesus in Jn.9:4, **I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.** And now here in vs.11.

² Charles Swindoll, pg.43.

3. Back in 1964 Mick Jagger sang “Time is on Our Side”. 48 years later, I’m not sure if they still sing that on tour today? – Jesus always taught the opposite. He taught “*Time is ticking away, tic, tic, ticking away!*”
 4. **We** focus on minor measurements of minutes; **God** focuses on Epochs & Era’s.
- D. Well, man has at least 1 eye on the **future**...but it is in the *negative!* - It is called the **Doomsday Clock!**
1. **Slide#12** Since its inception in 1947, the *symbolic Doomsday Clock* has signified the level of threat posed by nuclear weapons and other changing factors in international security.
 2. As the state of international security has changed, the **Doomsday Clock** has been changed **20 times** to reflect the **danger level** of the period.
 3. The **Doomsday Clock** was last changed on Jan 10, 2012 and currently stands at 5 minutes to midnight.³
- E. So Paul says, open your eyes! - Wake up to what time it really is! - And then explains there is *a new way to live* in light of the dawning of the eternal day!
- F. Oh, if every one of our clocks would scream *God’s sense of time!*
1. But just like talking to a youth about their dying one day...it just seems so far away to them.
 2. So, with us...Christ’s return? – Oh, I know it’s coming but I’m sure its after _____.
- G. Since the end is near...we need to **Wake up, Get up, Clean up, & get Dressed up!**
- H. **Slide#13 Outline:** *Wake up; Get up; Clean up; Dress up.*
- I. **Slide#14 WAKE UP!** (11)
- J. What’s the 1st thing you do when the alarm goes off in the morning? *Hit the snooze!*
- K. To some, there **salvation** is nearer...to the others, their **damnation** is nearer!
1. **Salvation is nearer** means every passing moment brings us closer to the end of “the hour” – closer to our glorification!
- L. This unveiling of true time...gave Paul the sense of urgency. Something we all should have.
1. **Our response:** Not like the Extremist & Alarmist, w/a Doomsday Mentality; **but instead**, understanding we only have a *limited amount of time* to **spread the gospel & make God known** to the world!
- M. **Slide#15 GET UP!** (12)
- N. Once we know what time it is, we need to **wake up & get out of bed!**
1. Paul is equating sleep w/*spiritual lethargy!*

³ From the bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.

- O. **Cast off the works of darkness** – Eph.5:11-14 NLT **Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them. It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said, “Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light.”**
1. Just as you get up in the morning & cast off your **night clothes** & wear the **appropriate attire** for the work that awaits you. **So, we are to do spiritually!**
- P. Our job as Christian’s is best accomplished when we are sporting our “Armor of light”, & our “Attire of Christ!”
1. Actually our mission is impossible w/o His protective gear: **Like, His Kevlar Vest of righteousness! Helmet of salvation, etc.**
- Q. Now before we can put on our armor, we 1st need to make sure we aren’t wearing something else...*the deeds of darkness!*
1. That’s like putting your Tee Shirt “over” a suit of armor.
 2. Swindoll put it this way, “If we want to wear Christ, we can’t be snuggled in the velvet-lined straitjacket of sinful habits.”
 3. Christ’s armor is **tailor fit** & can only be worn by **believers** who have *shrugged off their sinful lifestyles.*
- R. **Slide#16 CLEAN UP!** (13)
- S. **The 1st 4** sins deal w/the area of **immorality**; **the last 2** deal w/**relational sins**...*that can be just as destructive!*
- T. **Revelry** = It was used of a nocturnal, riotous procession of ½ drunken & frolicsome fellows who paraded through the streets w/torches & music in honor of Bacchus^{Roman}/Dionysus^{Gk} (god of grape harvest/wine) or some other deity. Then it was used generally of feasts & drinking parties that were protracted till late at night & indulged in revelry.⁴
- U. **Lust** – Animal lust, sheer self-indulgence which is such a slave to its so called pleasures that it is lost to shame. It is one who acknowledges no restraints. LKGNT
- V. **Slide#17,18 DRESS UP!** (14)
- W. Put on Jesus, His armor of light, the armor of God!
- X. Make no provision for the flesh - **What used to cause us to blush, what used to be considered shameful behavior,...now is our entertainment!** [From shock Jocks *to* sitcoms]
1. We find ourselves like in Jeremiah’s day, **Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush.** Jer.6:15

⁴ Thayer, in *Linguistic Key of the Greek N.T.*, pg.379

2. **What's our answer?** Same answer as God gave the Israelites Jer.6:16a **Thus says the Lord: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls.**
 3. **What is the good way?** – to distance ourselves from the deeds of darkness & cloth ourselves w/Jesus Christ!
- Y. **Slide#19** vs.11-14 msg **But make sure that you don't get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over, dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing! God is putting the finishing touches on the salvation work he began when we first believed. We can't afford to waste a minute, must not squander these precious daylight hours in frivolity and indulgence, in sleeping around and dissipation, in bickering and grabbing everything in sight. Get out of bed and get dressed! Don't loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ, and be up and about!**
- Z. **Slide#20blank** Communion:
1. Bread
 2. Cup