

How Does Love *FULFILL* God's Law?

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The Apostle Paul stated that “love is the **fulfillment** of the law” (Rom. 13:10). He likewise stated that, “he who loves another **has fulfilled** the law” (verse 8). So, does that mean that God's law is no longer necessary—and that we now only need to “love one another”?

Love and Law

Consider the issue of “**love**.” Scripture tells us that “God is love” (I John 4:8). It also tells us that “love” is one of the fruits of God's Spirit (Gal. 5: 22). In *both* of those scriptures, the word “love” is translated *from* the original Greek word *agape*. “Agape” is God's *own* love—a *type* of love which you and I do *not* naturally have!¹ An individual can come to *have* agape love **only if** the person comes to have God's Holy Spirit dwelling within him!² It is only *then*, that he *receives* agape love as one of the fruits of God's Spirit.

Consider now the issue of “**law**.” In particular, consider God's spiritual law—the law summarized by **The Ten Commandments—the law which Paul said is “spiritual”** (Rom. 7: 14, 7, *NIV*). Paul also said this: “Because the carnal mind [the mind which we are all born with] *is* enmity against [‘hostile to’] God; for it [one's natural mind] **is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be**. So then, those who are in the flesh **cannot** please God. But you are **not** in the flesh but in the Spirit, **if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you...**” (Rom. 8: 7-9).

Plainly, Paul is saying that **unless** you have God's Spirit dwelling in you, then you are **not subject** to God's law... and you *cannot* please God!

So, what have we seen? We've seen that it is **only by having God's Spirit within you** that you can (1) receive and express *agape love*, and (2) be subject to God's spiritual *law*!

Now, considering those two facts together, let's understand:

It takes SPIRITUAL-love to fulfill a SPIRITUAL-law!! Yes, *agape* love (God's *own* love) is required to fulfill His spiritual law! And that makes perfect *sense*, when we realize that God's spiritual law is a law OF love!

God's entire spiritual law can be summed up in the one word “love.” This “love” can be divided into the Two Great Commandments of the law—“love toward God” and “love toward fellowman” (Matt. 22: 36-40). Then, these Two Great Commandments are *further* divided into the Ten Commandments—which themselves are further magnified *throughout* the Bible, especially in the New Testament.

Law and Love Linked Together

As Jesus Christ stated, “**ALL** the Law” hangs on the two overall commandments to *love* God and to *love* fellowman (Matt. 22: 36-40). The first four of the Ten Commandments show the basics of *how* to love God. The last six show the basics of *how* to love fellowman.

The **way** of “love” is not left to the *interpretation* of each human being. “God **is** love” (I John 4:8), and He **knows** the way of love (Isa. 55: 8-9)—the way that **leads** to every good thing in life. God’s love runs down the channel or “riverbed” of His Ten Commandments. Therefore, if any particular action is *contrary* to God’s Ten Commandments, then what is being expressed is **not** Godly love!

Notice the following scriptures where “love” and “commandment-keeping” are *linked together*—and even **equalized**:

“For this **is** the **love** of God, that we keep His **commandments**...” (I John 5:3).

“This **is** **love**, that we walk according to His **commandments**...” (II John 6).

“And because **lawlessness** will abound, the **love** of many will grow cold” (Matt. 24: 12).

“He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His **commandments**, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever **keeps** His word, truly the **love** of God is perfected in him...” (I John 2: 4-5).

“He who has My commandments and **keeps them**, it is he who **loves** Me...” (John 14:21).

Yes, the Bible plainly shows that love and commandment-keeping are linked together, and even equalized. In fact, how could it be otherwise, when we consider that **God’s law is the very reflection of His love and His character?!**

Consequently, those who say we don’t need to obey God’s *law*, are actually teaching *against* love!

It is only by having God’s Spirit within you, that you *can* live by, not only the “letter of the law,” but *also* by its spirit and intent. Furthermore, God’s Spirit within you is actually *Christ* living *His* life in you (Gal. 2: 20; Rom. 8: 9-10). And, to the extent that you **yield** to Christ’s guidance, He will live, in you, the **same** manner of life that He lived 2,000 years ago—a life of agape love—a life of **obedience** to God’s spiritual law (Phil. 2: 8)!

“Love” is the way that God lives...and it’s the way He commands **us** to live! And, in telling us how to live, God gives us **laws** which He commands us to live by. Yes, love—agape love—*fulfills* God’s law (Rom. 13: 10); and the **reason** that love fulfills the law, is because God’s law is a law OF love. It is a law which *reveals* how to *express* true, Godly love. And, in order for you to keep God’s spiritual law in its *spirit and intent*, you must have God’s *own* agape love within you—which you can have **only by** having God’s Holy Spirit dwelling within you!

Conclusion

Let’s now go back to the very beginning of this article, where we quoted Paul saying “love *is* the **fulfillment** of the law” and that “he who loves another **has fulfilled** the law” (Rom. 13: 10, 8).

In both of those two scriptures, the word “love” is translated *from* the original Greek word *agape/agapao*. And, with that in mind, Paul’s meaning should now be totally obvious!^{3,4}

Furthermore, it should *likewise* be obvious that Paul did **NOT** mean that God’s law is no longer necessary! (For a discussion on Paul’s repeated *support* of God’s law, see the article “Did Paul Do Away With God’s Law?”)

Notes:

1. See the article “Agape Love”
2. For a discussion on **HOW to receive God’s Holy Spirit**, see the article “Christ OBEYED God’s Law and Requires Us to Do Likewise!”
3. For more on the subject of “fulfilling the law,” see the article “How Did **Christ** ‘FULFILL’ the Law?”
4. For a *further* discussion on Rom. 13: 8,10, see the article “Does ‘Love’ REPLACE God’s Law?”