

The Royal Law

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 January 2015

[0:00] Today I outline to you the royal law, the royal law, the king's law, the law of the king.

It's one of the first principles of God's kingdom, a primary doctrine. If we miss this, we miss everything. It is the royal command issued from the very throne of the supreme sovereign of the universe, his eternal majesty himself, our great God and saviour.

And issued for us, to us, his decree, his command, his royal command. James 2 verse 8.

If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well. The royal law, love thy neighbour as thyself.

God dictates love. He dictates it. He orders it.

[1:23] He commands it. It's his order. Love. It's his law. It's his command. The king of love has issued a royal law. And this message, the message is love.

He says unto you, love one another. The absolute ruler and lawgiver and judge says, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

The whole law is summed up in this one profound truth. It fulfils the law. Romans 13 verse 8.

Carries the theme again.

Romans 13 verse 8. O no man anything but to love one another. For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

The same truth there. He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. Now we heard about the law. Heard about free gift. Now we're looking at the law and love.

[2:28] Love fulfils the law. He hasn't done away with the law. He has fulfilled the law in his own character, in his own person. The one who speaks is the one who has shown us the greatest love that ever could be shown.

In John 15 verse 13, that familiar passage, it says, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Greater love hath no man than this. God in love became a man and took our penalty. He paid a debt we could not owe.

But we could not pay. A debt that we owed that we could not pay. And he took the wrath of God's judgment against us in love. And this is the one who on Mount Sinai wrote with his finger the law. The Ten Commandments by his own finger. He gave the law of the Lord his word. The law of the Lord is perfect. And as the word he was made flesh and he dwelt amongst us, everything that the law demanded he fulfilled.

[3:43] He completed it. He totally completed it. And he teaches us how we can fulfil the law too.

We can fulfil the law. Paul says the same things as James said. Galatians 5.14 Paul says all the law.

Genesis to Revelation. All the law is fulfilled in one word. Even in this. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

The King of Kings has decreed a royal law. He's given it to us. This is His word. His word for you today.

One word. Love. One word. The King has dwelt amongst His own subjects. He's come and shown us kingdom values.

[4:50] In His love, His mercy, His compassion, He demonstrated His love towards us. It says of Him, This man receiveth sinners. It was His accusers who said that.

They said it with a snarl in their voice and spitting His name. He receiveth sinners. Sinners.

And we are called to love the way Jesus loved. The love of God is beyond compare. Yet His love can fill our own human hearts.

Think of His love. Think of His love. His love is everlasting. He's loved us with an everlasting love. His love is steadfast. His love is song, suffering. His love is faithful. His love is selfless, unconditional, self-sacrificing.

[5:51] God's love has no respect of persons. He doesn't play favourites. He teaches us to love God and to love our neighbour. And what's more, to love even our enemies.

Wow. That's beyond any kind of moral code. Any kind of thing you could compare it to, isn't it? In Matthew 5, verse 4, He says, But I say unto you, Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you. And pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you. It blows your mind, doesn't it?

What love! To love your enemies and to love to that nth degree. And some people miss the whole point of the law. They miss the whole point of the law.

[6:49] You know, I've had dealings with some churches and you see that there's just heap condemnation on people. They heap condemnation on people.

There's no grace there. And people in such a mindset end up in a works-based religion. It's about works. They're running on this treadmill of their own making.

They're wearing a millstone that burdens them and loads them down with impossible demands. And they're bearing a yoke of bondage around their necks that only frustrates them and holds them captive.

This is works-based religion. Now there's people that think they've got to save themselves and what's more, they've got to keep themselves saved by doing more, by doing more, by doing more, by doing more.

And if ever they fail, they lose their salvation. Wow! Back to square one. So they've got to do more and do more and do more.

[7:53] Vanity of vanities. If it's a salvation that can be lost, it's not God's salvation. He has loved us with an everlasting love.

Our salvation is His work. Finished at the cross. Finished then for all eternity. Your sins were paid for past, present and future.

All covered by His blood and grace. And some people miss the whole point by this works-based religion. And all the while they miss the simple realities that the true liberty and freedom that Christ brings to set people free.

To set us free. And what our Lord asks of us is not complicated, it's not heavy. And that's not to say we do despite to His grace.

But it's because of His grace that we're motivated to love Him. A lawyer in Jesus' day, a teacher who is skilled in the law of Moses, tested Him one day in Matthew 22.

[9:08] He came to Christ in Matthew 22 and He says, Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

And Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt 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 shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

It's all they. Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind.

Another gospel says, And with all thy strength.

And love thy neighbour as thyself. The royal command is clear. God dictates love. He commands it. It's not optional.

[10:08] It is a command. And He explained it in the story of the Samaritan. A certain Samaritan. Because the Pharisees sort of excluded some people from those that they had to be nice to.

The Samaritans. But God says, Our neighbour is all-encompassing. There's no one excluded.

So God dictates love. Secondly, God defines love. God is love.

1 John 4 verse 8. He is love, pure love. He that loveth not knoweth not God. For God is love. 1 John 4 verse 8.

So God defines love. He is love defined. He is love incarnate. He is love, personal love. God wants us to show mercy like He does.

[11:15] As I say, I've seen some quite loveless churches in my time. Loveless churches. Loveless. condemning, callous, cold, as if grace is totally absent.

Loveless Christians. Loveless Christians. Selfish and uncaring. Quick to point the finger. To condemn. To tell them to repent.

And yes, we should repent. All of us should be repentant. Christians. But it's not about pointing fingers. It is sad to see a loveless church where grace is lacking and the love of Jesus seems sadly missing.

As a church, I pray that this church, that we will be different. That we will determine deliberately to be different. To be a loving church.

to be a pro-love church. That doesn't mean we are anti-law. It fulfills the law.

[12:25] It makes the law complete. It makes God's word live when we love. The law is needful. Now thank God we've got some officers of the law that help look after us.

And tell us off when we need telling off. That means you lot when you get told off. I got pulled over by one of these men in black now. They're not men in blue.

But he pulled me over and he gave me a breath test and of course it was zero. And he pulled me over and he said sir you've been going a bit over the speed limit.

I knew that's why he pulled me over. I thought okay yes yes I have been there. And he showed grace towards me. He didn't charge me. I don't know if he was allowed to do that.

But thank God for cops like that. Amen. But no we need law to keep us on the straight and narrow. We need the law. We need the law.

[13:30] A lawless society is dangerous and hostile. Imagine a lawless society. There's some places in our world like that where it's the law of the jungle isn't it?

Law brings rightful order and liberty. It brings true freedom and safety. That is the law. The law of the Lord is perfect. God's word shows us how to live.

It brings true freedom and liberty. But the important point is that the law is fulfilled by love. It's the royal law. The royal law, the king's way.

The kingdom of God is within you. The king is walking in your shoes. The royal law is that Christ is in you. May God be manifest in what you do, in deed and in truth, to be a loving church.

That people will see in us his compassion, his nature, his response in how we treat others. God's kingdom is ruled by love.

[14:37] He is the king of love and love is the key to release people from the prison house of despair. Really, it's God's love, isn't it? John 3, 16, the gospel.

God so loved that he gave his only begotten son. Love is the king. Love lifts, love liberates. Love is the law of his kingdom, the language of his kingdom, the lifestyle of his kingdom.

The law, it's not about rituals and regulations. What he cares about is relationship. That's what he wanted right from the garden. Genesis, right through.

God wants relationship with you. He wants to know you and for you to know him and for you to live that love. He wants to be in fellowship with you and for you to be in right relationship with others.

That's the hard part sometimes, isn't it? Okay? When we rub shoulders with other people, they rub us up the wrong way. Who's got people like that?

[15:41] Who's married to one like that? No. God helps us by the people in our lives to make us more like Christ, doesn't he? He helps us through that wonderful reality of human beings in our lives, the people that we love, people we've got to try harder to love more.

So God dictates love. He decrees it, it's His royal law, He dictates it. It's here, love, L-O-V-E, the cross, love. He dictates love, He defines love, He defines love as God manifest in the flesh, the word dwelling amongst us, made flesh, dying and rising again, bringing new life.

God demonstrates love. God demonstrates love. love. The Lord Jesus is love. The Lord Jesus showed love. He showed us how it is done.

We've got no greater example, no, that's a template, no, that's a model of how love can be possible for you and me. He lived it out.

As a human being, He lived love. love. Now at times He showed love by confronting, He confronted sin and error in destruction, destructive behaviours and attitudes.

[17:12] He spoke against such things, He confronted such things. He reached out in love, He reached out in love and He showed love sometimes by confronting things, confronting sinful situations.

But He reached out in love, He responded to the needs of the suffering, He healed the sick, He fed the hungry, He listened to people, He heard their cries, He prayed for people, He brought hope and wholeness, He showed compassion and He showed mercy and He showed forgiveness.

Christ demonstrated love. Even on the cross, what did He do? Even on the cross, He looked down at His own mother and He wanted to make sure she was looked after.

That's love, isn't it? He could have had a pity party, woe is me, but no, He thought even of His own mother standing there that she needed someone to be taking care of her when He was gone.

And He took steps for John to take care of her. That's amazing, isn't it? That's love. He showed us how to love. This is His law, love.

[18:31] His love is an everlasting love, everlasting. It doesn't stop and start. It's not dependent on what we do. His love is an everlasting love.

He's faithful and true. And His love covers a multitude of sins. Now where sin abounds, grace does much more abound. That's amazing, isn't it? That those who are most unworthy, most undeserving, yet God can cover a multitude of sins by His love.

That's not to say we do despite to His grace, as I say. It's so amazing, His grace, that it makes us one to love Him more. God demonstrates His love.

And as members of His kingdom, we're subjects in His kingdom, under His kingdom rule, under His reign.

And moreover, we are children and heirs, sons and daughters of the King of Kings. Members of the royal family are here today. And we bear the family likeness.

[19:41] Who's ever seen, I saw some photos of three generations of this old friend that I knew, and it was him and his son and his grandson and you could see the family resemblance there.

It was striking. There was a family resemblance there that was striking. The likeness of the father was in the son and in the grandson. You bear His likeness.

You bear the family likeness as children of God. God, we should reflect His love. And genuine love is one of the things I look back on many of the Christians that I've known in my life and the ones that stand out for me the most have that common feature.

The Christians I most respect that I've known in my life have had this common feature of love.

There's love that is evident. It's not been their severe law keeping, but it's been that evident love of God shed abroad in their hearts.

And love stamps us with God's identity. The character of Christ. Love is our citizenship. It's our passport. It's our ID, our identification.

[21:06] It says we belong to Him. The love of God stamps us. It marks us. It should rule and overrule us. Love carries us, compels us, constrains us.

Galatians 5 14. Paul says again, For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

It's a repeated theme in the word of God. We're called to walk in love. Peter tells of love, real love, not faked, not fake, not pretend, real love.

1 Peter 1 22. He says, Seeing you have purified your souls and obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfaked love of the brethren.

Unfaked means it's not fake, it's real. See that you love one another with a pure heart, fervently. Love one another, how?

[22:09] With a pure heart, fervently. God calls us to be a loving assembly where love prevails, love prevails, in our conduct, in our relationships, where we love one another with a pure heart, how?

Fervently, fervently. Fervently. It's got a real earnestness to it, hasn't it? Fervently. Sometimes, our love can be shown in need for correction.

There's time to love someone by telling them to sort something out. Honest rebuke. Love may not always be giving a handout.

When people come asking for something, sometimes the best way we can help them is to encourage them to find a job and take some steps to support themselves if they're physically able. Love may not always pander to the complainer. Love speaks the truth. Love helps others to grow. Love goes the extra mile.

[23:21] There was a doctor who was asked one day, of his opinion. And he listed several emotions that produce disease in human beings.

These are the things that he rattled off. Fear, frustration, rage, resentment, hatred, envy, jealousy. And he says for all of these several emotions that produce human disease, he says there's only one antidote that can save people from being destroyed.

Love. Love. Fear, frustration, rage, resentment, hatred, envy, jealousy can be overcome by love. Amen. And friends, just to wrap up, how are we in the measurement of this grace of love? How are we today? As I say, I think of this circumstance of this person that I know is under condemnation.

[24:34] Condemnation. I look at how our Lord treated people. How did our Lord treat people? What did he say to the woman caught in the very act of adultery?

He said go and sin no more, but he says, I don't condemn you. He showed love, he extended love, he gave forgiveness, he dealt with sin, yes.

Sin was not brushed under the carpet, but he extended grace and love, and so too must we. Our salvation, our sanctification is founded on love.

We're saved and we grow by love, and love should abound, it should be fervent love, it should be loving one another with a pure heart fervently.

1 John 3 18, John wraps it up, he says, my little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

[25:44] We can love in word, in tongue, and say, oh, I love you, but let's love in deed and in truth. Put it into action, love in action.

And so, friends, to wrap up, God dictates love, it's the royal law, it's the king's command, he dictates it, he defines it, God is love, he's the definition, the definition is Christ.

He defines love, and he demonstrates love, he shows us how it can be done, it can be real in your life and mine, it can live in your shoes, the love of God, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

And love urges us, it constrains us, it compels us to reach out with the gospel of his love, the gospel of his grace, to reach out with the message of his saving love to this planet.

While love still avails, while wrath is still held back, there is love extended today. And if you've yet to trust Christ, his love is extended to you.

[27:04] His message is, come unto me. He receives sinners still, God's not closed the door yet. One day, the door will shut.

As it did in Noah's day, who shut the door? God shut the door. God said, right, time's up. One day he's going to say that for you. There is an appointed time.

It is appointed unto man once to die, but after that the judgment. grace and love extends the gift, if you will but receive it.

And believers here today, let's not love in tongue, in word, but in deed and in truth. Let's make that love live in those human interactions with those people that God has placed in your lives.

Could be people that rub you up the wrong way. You know, Julie's got so much grace because of who she's married to. Wow, he really tests her.

[28:13] What a saint she is. Wow, she's just got so much to cope with. That's why she's such a glowing testimony of God's power.

God helps us to love, doesn't he? And sometimes through the people he puts in our lives. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for your love. extend it so undeservedly to such as we.

Lord, we love you and thank you for that. We thank you, Lord, help us to seek to love you more and to love our neighbour as ourself, to love one another as you have loved us.

In Jesus' name. Thank you.