

Romans 13:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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 neighbour as thyself.

Analysis

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 neighbour as thyself—Paul quotes five commandments from the Decalogue's second table (Exodus 20:13-17), summarized by *agapēseis ton plēsion sou hōs seauton* (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν, 'you shall love your neighbor as yourself,' Leviticus 19:18).

Anakephalaiouta (ἀνακεφαλαιόω, summed up/comprehended) means to bring to a head, to unify under one principle. All relational commands are fulfilled in love. Plēsion (neighbor) is anyone in proximity or need (Luke 10:25-37). Hōs seauton (as yourself) doesn't command self-love but assumes it—you naturally seek your own good; extend the same care to others. This isn't sentimental feeling but active benevolence—willing and working for another's welfare.

Historical Context

Jesus first linked Deuteronomy 6:5 (love God) and Leviticus 19:18 (love neighbor) as the law's summary (Matthew 22:37-40). Paul applies this: Christians fulfill the

law not through external compliance but through love flowing from faith (Galatians 5:6). This countered both legalistic Jews (who multiplied regulations) and antinomian Gentiles (who dismissed moral law). Love is law's fulfillment, not its abolition—the Spirit writes God's heart-law on believers, producing obedience from love not fear.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does summarizing the law in love (*agapēseis ton plēson*) simplify Christian ethics without becoming simplistic or permissive?
2. What is the difference between loving your neighbor 'as yourself' and modern self-love psychology or self-esteem teachings?
3. Which of the Ten Commandments (adultery, murder, theft, lying, coveting) is hardest for you to fulfill through love rather than mere rule-keeping?

Interlinear Text

τὸ	γὰρ	Οὐκ	μοιχεύσεις	Οὐκ	φονεύσεις	Οὐκ	κλέψεις
G3588	For	not	commit adultery	not	Thou shalt	not	Thou shalt
	G1063	G3756	G3431	G3756	G5407	G3756	G2813
Οὐκ	ψευδομαρτυρήσεις,	Οὐκ	ἐπιθυμήσεις	καὶ	εἴ	τις	
not	Thou shalt	not	Thou shalt	and			
G3756	G5576	G3756	G1937	G2532	G1487	G5100	
ἑτέρα	ἐντολή	ἐν	τούτῳ	τῷ	λόγῳ	ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται,	
other	commandment	in	this		saying	it is briefly comprehended	
G2087	G1785	G1722	G5129	G3588	G3056	G346	
ἐν	τῷ	Ἀγαπήσεις	τὸν	πλησίον	σου	ὡς	ἑαυτόν
in		Thou shalt love		neighbour	thy	as	thyself
G1722	G3588	G25	G3588	G4139	G4675	G5613	G1438

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 22:39 (Love): And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Luke 10:27 (Love): And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

Mark 12:31 (Love): And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Leviticus 19:18 (Love): Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

Leviticus 19:34 (Love): But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Galatians 5:13 (Love): For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

Mark 10:19 (Word): Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

Luke 18:20 (Word): Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

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