

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 plēsion) 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 G1487 G5100
G3756 G5576 G3756 G1937 G2532

ἐτέρα 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 ἔαυτόν
in G3588 Thou shalt love G3588 neighbour thy as thyself
G1722 G25 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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