



**DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS**

**Carstairs-Bancroft United Church**

*February 15, 2024*



Photo: Our Daily Bread

## GOD'S GREAT LOVE CYCLE

*Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another.*

Romans 13:8

**READ Romans 13:8-10**

As a new believer in Jesus at the age of thirty, I had lots of questions after committing my life to Him. When I started reading the Scriptures, I had even more questions. I reached out to a friend. "How can I possibly obey all God's commands? I just snapped at my husband this morning!"

"Just keep reading your Bible," she said, "and ask the Holy Spirit to help you love like Jesus loves you."

After more than twenty years of living as a child of God, that simple but profound truth still helps me embrace the three steps in His great love cycle: First, the apostle Paul affirmed that love is central in the life of a believer in Jesus. Second, by continuing to pay the "debt to love one another," followers of Christ will walk in obedience, "for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8). Finally, we fulfill the law because "love does no harm to a neighbor" (v. 10).

When we experience the depth of God's love for us, demonstrated best through Christ's sacrifice on the cross, we can respond with gratitude. Our grateful devotion to Jesus leads to loving others with our words, actions, and attitudes. Genuine love flows from the one true God who is love (1 John 4:16, 19).

Loving God, help us get caught up in Your great love cycle!

**By Xochitl Dixon**

### **PRAY & REFLECT**

**Dear Jesus, please help me believe You love me so I can love others through the overflow of Your love for me. Amen**

When have you struggled to feel loved by Jesus or to love like He loves? How does knowing Christ loves you completely and unconditionally change the way you love others?

### **SCRIPTURE INSIGHT**

The Bible has much to say about loving others. Jesus says that "to love your neighbor as yourself" is the second greatest commandment (Matthew 22:39) and that the greatest love a person can show is to "lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13).

Paul's description of love in 1 Corinthians 13 refers to the love the body of Christ should have for one another. But in his letter to the Roman believers in Jesus, Paul puts his admonition to love (13:8-10) in a peculiar place. It's sandwiched between an exhortation to be submissive to governing authorities by fulfilling civic responsibilities (vv. 1-7)—authorities that weren't friendly to early believers in Christ—and a reminder that the day of Lord is "nearer now than when we first believed" (v. 11). Perhaps the apostle is suggesting that love is a responsibility (akin to civic responsibility) that's motivated by anticipating our future with Jesus. – By **JR Hudberg**

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