

**Your Time Is Short – So Love**  
(Romans 13:8-14      December 18, 2011)



I logged on to the news yesterday and found these stories at the top of the heap.

A fit healthy Molly Meldrum falls from a ladder – his life is now in the balance.

Jason Richards – 35 – a V8 Supercar racer earlier this year – dead from cancer.

Even in our own church – Diana Greenwood had her own brush with mortality – waking up unable to breathe – losing consciousness, turning blue, requiring a lot of resuscitation to bring her back.

Our hold on this world is so fragile. Any day may be our last. One day will be our last.

Yet we are a society that lives for tomorrow – too much debt, too little thought of consequences while the reality is that none of us knows if there will be a tomorrow.

The truth is – we may get hit by a bus – our time may soon be up – and one day – the Lord Jesus *will* return and every number will be up.

So as Christians, how should we live in light of the fact that our time in this world is short?

We find the answer to this question in this morning's passage.

Basically – the answer is to love.

Our passage is part of a long section that begins in Romans 12:1 and continues through to Romans 15:13.

In verses 1 and 2 of Romans 12 we learned about living in Christ.



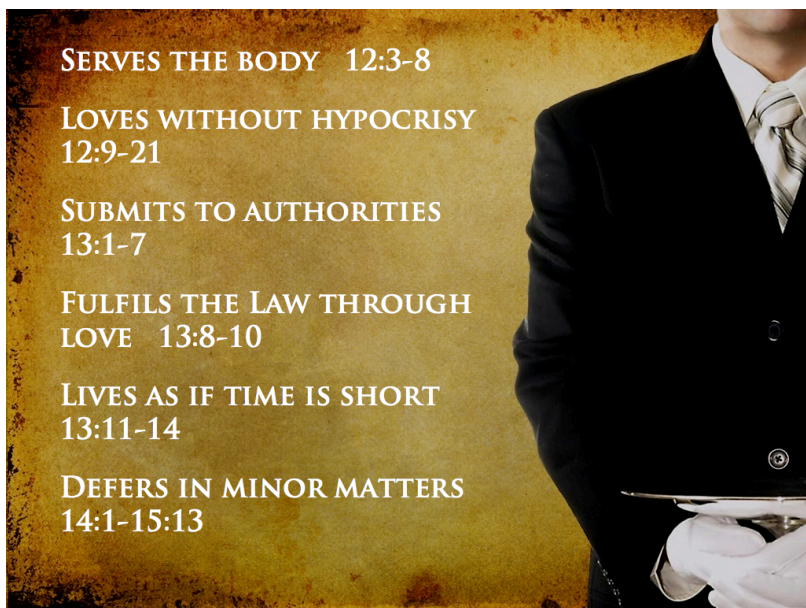
Power      By the mercies of God

What      Present your bodies as a living sacrifice

How      Resist conformity to the world  
 Practice transforming mind renewal

Then from verse 3 of Romans 12 to verse 13 of Romans 15 – Paul gives us some very practical examples of what it means to be a living sacrifice – resisting the world with a transformed, renewed mind.

Here are the pictures he paints. One who presents their bodies as a living sacrifice:



Serves the body      12:3-8

Loves without hypocrisy 12:9-21  
Submits to authorities 13:1-7  
Fulfils the Law through Love 13:8-10  
Lives as if time is short 13:11-14  
Defers in minor matters 14:1-15:13

Three weeks ago we are looked at the first mark of a transformed life. A Christian who lays down their life as a living sacrifice – **Serves the body**.



One body – but with many members.

Each with gifts that together empower the body.

The result is each local congregation is made up of many parts – and a healthy church needs each and every part.

We then looked at the second picture. A Christian who presents their body as a living sacrifice:

**Loves without hypocrisy.**

In Romans 12 verses 9-21, Paul paints a whole canvas of what this genuine love looks like.

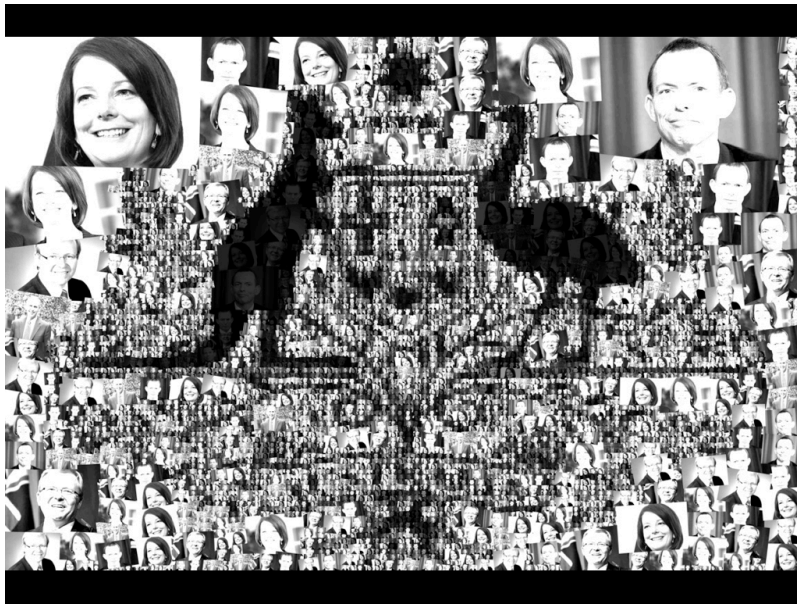
Vignettes, descriptions, reminders – that together paint a picture of genuine Christlike love.





Last week we looked at the third mark. A transformed saint will:

**Submit to authorities.**



This morning we look at the fourth and fifth marks of a Christian who lays down their life as a living sacrifice.

They:

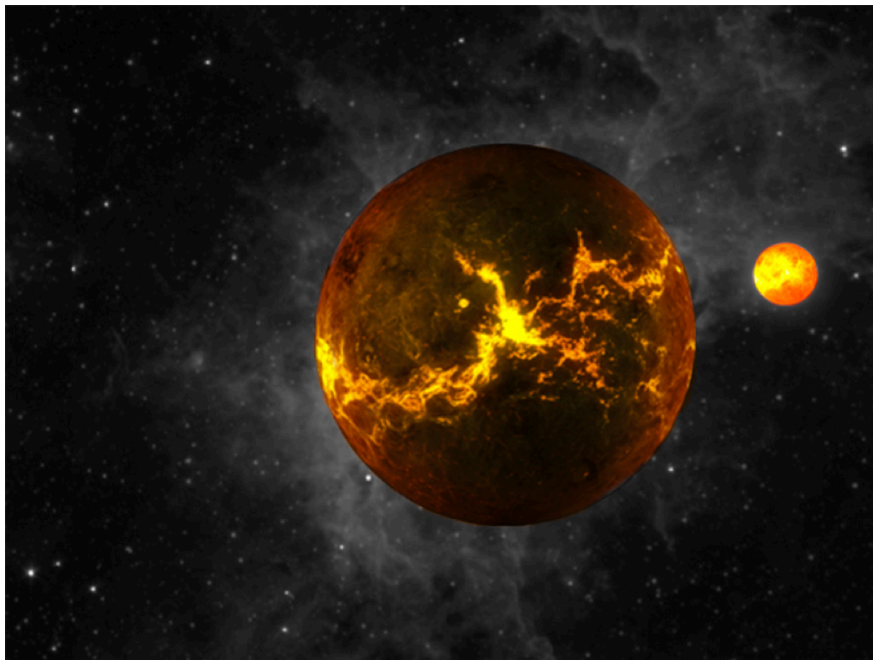
**Fulfil the Law through love**





And they:

**Live as if time is short**



Before we look at these point, we need to remember why living with transformed lives is crucial.

1 Peter 2:9 says:

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

When we say no to the world. When we have our minds transformed so we serve the church, love our enemies, submit to governments, minister to our neighbours, live for eternity and defer to weaker brethren – the world sees the power of the gospel.

But if we call ourselves Christians – but we love the same things as them – sex and money and pleasure. If we only love our family and trample on others. If all our time is for us. Basically – if we live just like them – then the power of the gospel is obscured in us – we are hiding the light of Christ under a bushel.

We begin this morning by looking at the *fourth* mark of a Christian who lays down their life as a living sacrifice.

They:

### **Fulfil the Law through love**

When I was a young believer I witnessed a fascinating confrontation. A young couple were standing in the home of a couple who were in their 40's. The young couple were screaming out the first few verses of James 5 for all they were worth:

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days.

Then they stormed out slamming the door.

A few nights later there was a knock at my door. It was the same couple. I invited them in. The conversation was much more civilised this time.

I knew both couples. The couple in their 40s were comfortable but not wealthy – so I asked why they were deemed rich. The young couple replied that every person who owned a home was by definition – rich.

It was then I made my mistake. I told them that the couple in their 40's didn't own that house. The bank owned most of it.

The husband looked at me and said – that just proves the sin they are in. To owe money to a bank is in direct violation of the Scriptures.

He had me turn to Romans 13:8:

Owe no one anything, except to love one another.

It seemed fairly clear cut. He said it proved that to owe a bank or even a friend was wrong.

For the next few weeks, I looked at most of the Christians I knew with suspicion. Were they in sin by taking out a mortgage? Finally, I studied that passage – our passage this morning. And I was shocked.

Romans 13:8-14 is one of the most magnificent paragraphs in the Bible. And this young couple had taken it, twisted it and ruined the thrust of these wonderful thoughts.

Paul said – Owe no one anything, **except** to love each other. Their response was to my mind anything but loving.

They had focussed on one phrase and missed the main point Paul was making.

Paul begins this section by saying:

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

This is primarily a passage about living lives of Christlike love – not about fiscal management.

Unfortunately it is often used in the context of housing loans and the like – so let me answer the question – is it wrong to borrow money? Is it unbiblical to have a credit card in your wallet or a mortgage over your home or a monthly payment for your car?

Nothing in the Bible forbids either borrowing or lending. What *is* forbidden is for a borrower to default on a loan or for a lender to charge exorbitant interest.

Some people have assumed that it was wrong to ever loan or borrow money with interest involved because of verses like Exodus 22:25:

If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be like a moneylender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him.

But, this is a command to Israel – the people of God – that if a brother is poor and needs to borrow money, you are to help them out with a loan and not charge interest.

Interest free loans were one of the ways that a Jew could help a poor brother. He could simply give the money or he could loan it at no interest. Listen to Leviticus 25:35-36:

If your brother becomes poor and cannot maintain himself with you, you shall support him as though he were a stranger and a sojourner, and he shall live with you. Take no interest from him or profit, but fear your God, that your brother may live beside you.

All of these commands have to do with helping the poor. And one further law that God gave was this – every sabbatical year, one year in seven – all debts to fellow Jews were to be forgiven. Let me say that again – every seventh year – all debts were to be forgiven.

Deuteronomy 15:1–10:



At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release. And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor. He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the LORD's release has been proclaimed. Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release. But there will be no poor among you; for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess— if only you will strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all this commandment that I command you today. For the LORD your God will bless you, as he promised you, and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow, and you shall rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over you. “If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, ‘The seventh year, the year of release is near,’ and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin. You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.

Note three things. *First* – this only applied to Jews – not to foreigners. *Second* – if the Sabbath year was approaching you were not to lean on the poor man and say – pay up now before the Sabbath year is here. And *third* – you were not to refuse to lend money because the Sabbath was approaching.

Could you imagine turning on the TV and hearing this advertisement:

Times tough – come to *Aussie Bank*. If you are a fellow Aussie – we are here to help you. Forget worrying about whether the Reserve Bank will change interest rates – because with us the interest rate is always 0%. That is right – no interest at all. More than that, if times get tough – feel free to not make any repayments – we won't hassle you. *And* – get this – every seventh year – we wipe out your whole debt – no strings – no loopholes – we wipe out your debt. You can't beat that.

*Aussie Bank* – a bank you will love.

Sign me up today. But unfortunately that is one advertisement you will never hear. Banks are businesses not charities.

And that is exactly what Deuteronomy 15 is describing – a charity not a business.

This was one way for a well-off Jew to help a brother in need. This is not talking about an investment – it is charity. A gift to help the poor.

The reward is not earthly – it is eternal.

But these regulations did not forbid borrowing with interest or putting one's money in a bank at interest. Consider one example. In the parable of the talents, Jesus commended the servants who had invested the money wisely. But he rebuked the servant who buried the money. The rebuke was – Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest.

Borrowing and interest are not in themselves wrong. What is wrong is if you borrow and you do not repay. What is wrong is if you lend out money to a poor person at exorbitant interest rates.

So if Romans 13:8 is not a law against borrowing – what does it mean?

In verse 7 of Romans 13, Paul had written that we must pay our obligation to governments:

Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honour to whom honour is owed.

Now in verse 8 he moves to address our obligation to all men – Owe nothing to anyone.

The word usually translated 'owe' might better be translated as 'be obliged.'

We might paraphrase this – Don't fail to meet your obligations.

Don't have any outstanding obligations – loans you aren't paying, commitments you are not fulfilling. Don't run your life in such a way that brings dishonour to Christ.

If you have a debt – pay it. If you have a payment due – make it. If you make a promise – keep it.

A Christian should be a man of his word. It is the way we are to live.

Paul uses this phrase to transition from his discussion about governments to his general principle of love. Look at how he does it:

Owe no one anything, *except* to love one another.

The *only* obligation – the *only* obligation – a Christian should carry is the obligation to love one another. The only debt we should have is a debt of love to others. The early church father, Origen put it this way:

The debt of love remains with us permanently and never leaves us. This is a gracious provision, it is a debt we will always have the resources to pay and which, the more we pay toward it, the more willing and joyous the payment will be.

The debt of love is a debt we can never be rid of because we are forever under the command to love our neighbour.

Look at the last part of verse 8:

For the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

When He walked this world, Jesus had been confronted by a Scribe who asked Him this question:

What commandment is the foremost of all?

Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Love God and love your neighbour – all the Law is summed up in these.

All of the Law as found in the Old Testament relates to two things – how we are to respond to God and how we are to respond to others. Love God and love your neighbour sums them all up.

This also begs the question – who are we to love? Under the Pharisaic interpretation of the Law, your neighbours were those Jews who kept the Law. This meant that no Gentile could be your neighbour. This meant that a Jew who failed to keep the Pharisee's teachings on the Law, men such as tax-gatherers—they too were not your neighbour.

But Jesus had corrected this error.

On His long, final journey to Jerusalem, a lawyer had questioned Jesus and asked:

"And who is my neighbour?"

Jesus' response was to paint a picture. He told the parable of the Good Samaritan. His point was that all men are our neighbours. Friends, relatives, enemies, strangers. All men are to be the recipients of our love.

Paul makes the same point. It is not just Christians we are to love. In chapter 12 he had commanded us to love even our enemies. We love them with a love that can only come from the power of the Spirit of God.

Verse 9:

For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself."

You shall love your neighbour as yourself.



Every Law you can think of is covered by this statement.

Don't steal. You won't steal from one you love.

Don't cheat in business. You won't cheat those you love.

Don't divorce. You won't divorce one you love.

One of the great mistakes the Jews made was to misunderstand the Law. They thought that the Law of Moses was a comprehensive list of commands for living.

But, the Old Testament Law couldn't cover every possibility. Nowhere in the whole Old Testament can we find this command:

Do not create a computer virus, disguise it in a picture of a half naked woman, and disseminate it via email throughout the world.

But the command to love your neighbour means you won't do that.

That is why Paul can say – any *other* commandment – not just adultery, murder, theft and coveting – but *any* law in the Old Testament and any implied law is covered by the command to love your neighbour. Do this and you have fulfilled the law.

If you follow the mistake of the Jews and make Christian living a list of dos and don'ts – you can end up very unloving.

The priest and the rabbi who passed the wounded man in Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan – kept the letter of the Law – but totally failed the Law of Love.

You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

We are such self-centred creatures. We love ourselves so much it is incredible.

We put self first, family next, then friends, then acquaintances, then strangers, then enemies.

We do anything for self, a little for some, and nothing for most.

But imagine if we do what is unnatural?

In any situation – ask yourself – if that were me – what would my pleasure loving heart want to happen to me?

When someone is picking on the immigrant kid at school – if that were me – what would I want? Someone to stand up for me.

If my workmate is having a hard time in his marriage– if that were me – what would I want? Someone to support me and give me wise counsel.

If my neighbour has lost his job – if that were me – what would I want? Someone to bring a meal and maybe some cash.

The world loves themselves – the Christian loves the world the way they want to be loved.

This is a powerful testimony to the reality of Christ.

Verse 10:

Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

A child of God empowered by love will never wrong a neighbour. He will love him as he loves himself. He will give preference to others. He will serve him as serving Christ.

And in this – he fulfils the Law. And in this he displays the love of Christ.

An anonymous author reworded 1 Corinthians 13, the famous chapter on Christian love. He wrote:

If I know the language perfectly and speak like a native, and have not God's love for them, I am nothing. If I have diplomas and degrees and know all the up-to-date methods, and have not His touch of understanding love, I am nothing. If I am able to argue successfully against the religions of the people and make fools of them, and have not His wooing note, I am nothing. If I have all faith and great ideals and magnificent plans, and not His love that sweats and bleeds and weeps and prays and pleads, I am nothing. If I give my clothes and money to them, and have not His love for them, I am nothing.

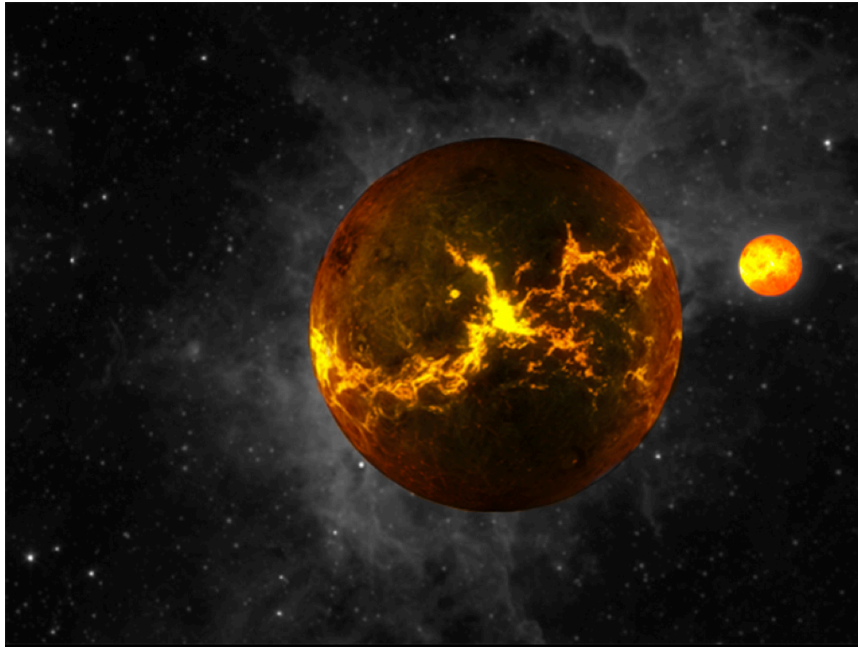
If I surrender all prospects, leave home and friends, make the sacrifices of a missionary career, and turn sour and selfish amid the daily annoyances and slights of missionary life, and have not the love that yields its rights, its pleasures, its pet plans, I am nothing. Virtue has ceased to go out of me. If I can heal all manner of sickness and disease, but wound hearts and hurt feelings for want of His love that is kind, I am nothing. If I can write articles or publish books that win applause, but fail to transcribe the Word of the Cross into the language of His love, I am nothing.

Without love we are nothing. With love, we declare Christ to the world.

We now come to the *fifth* mark of a Christian who lays down their life as a living sacrifice.

They:

**Live as if time is short**



All throughout the history of humanity, there have been two conflicting worldviews.

One view said that man is flesh and without a spirit. When he dies, that is the end. There is no soul. There is no afterlife. There is no judgment.

This view can be found since the time of the fall – but it crystallised in the teachings of Aristotle. The philosophy of Aristotle replaced that of Socrates and Plato. It became the centre-point of Greek culture and centuries later it was the driving force behind the rationalism of the enlightenment. The Roman poet Horace wrote a poem immortalising the thoughts of Aristotle. One stanza of that poem reads like this:

Once you are dead, and Minos' high decree,  
Shall speak to seal your doom –  
Though noble, pious, eloquent you be,  
These snatch not from the tomb.

*These snatch not from the tomb.* In other words, death is the end. Rotting in a tomb is all we can aspire to.

This humanism had a devastating effect on Greek culture. And it has devastated western thought for the past five hundred years.

If this life is all there is. If death ends our pitiful life. Then reason dictates that we should live for today. Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die. If there is no judgment to come – then we should wring every last ounce of pleasure out of this life. If we trample other men – so be it.

Forget loving others. Take what you can from them. Pleasure is King. Time is precious. The forces of nature have given us three-score years and ten – enjoy them while you can.



However, there is another view of life that has been found arising in every culture. The concept that this life is not all there is. The idea of the immortality of the soul. The thought of a judgment and afterlife.

Every society has had this thought in some form or another. Most religions have this concept. The idea that we must face up to the way we have lived. A judgment to come.

It is this second view of life that is the true one. In Ecclesiastes 12:14 we are told that:

God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

Paul knows this truth. We live on this planet for seventy years. But death is not the end. Death is the beginning.

But, because there is a God, and a judgment to come – this life is not to be spent in the pursuit of selfish pleasures. This seventy years is to be spent in glorifying God and glorying in Christ. This seventy years is to be spent in presenting our bodies a living, holy acceptable to God sacrifice. But that time flies so fast. There is no time to waste seeking the pleasures of this world.

We have no time to waste in the service of our God. So in these four verses, Paul cries – today is the day to serve our God. Not tomorrow – today is the day.

Look at verse 11:

Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.

Do this – present your bodies, love you neighbour, serve God – do it *now!* Believers, if you are asleep – if you are lazing in your duty of service – now is the time to awake. Examine your lives. Are you living as if this world is all there is. If so – awake now!

Salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The day where our salvation is completed – our death or the return of Christ is closer now than when we first trusted the Lord.

Every second, every minute, every hour – is time you cannot have over again – time that brings you nearer to the end.

Every one of us is given a very precious gift – time. Time to love Christ and make Christ known.

And that time runs faster than we can ever imagine. Christmas is upon us. Another year has gone. One seventy-fifth of the average life – gone in the last twelve months.

More grey hairs, children older, grandchildren older – closer to eternity.

The time is short. So awake and live for Christ!

This is something we need stencilled on the inside of our eyelids. Saved or unsaved, we are a race of procrastinators and resolution makers.

I will start the diet *after* this last bar of chocolate.

I will get a good night's sleep tonight, then tomorrow I will get up early and have my quiet time.

I will pay off the house, then I will give to God.

I will educate the kids, then I will give time to serving God.

The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

The most dangerous day in a Christian's life is when he learns that there is such a word as tomorrow. We justify living for self today with the good intention of serving God tomorrow.

But Scripture does not talk about tomorrow. It speaks of today.

Today is the day of action. If we delay today, we will delay tomorrow. The promised day of action never comes. We only need look at our litany of broken pledges and resolutions. If we don't act now – we won't act tomorrow.

The truth is that we may not have a tomorrow. As the rich fool found out, our soul may be required *this* day. Death or the end of world history might not give us the tomorrows we are banking on. We cannot live for tomorrow – only for today.

Paul knows this. If we are to live for Christ we start now – not later. Why? Because salvation is nearer to us than when we first believed.

Paul is speaking about the final aspect of our salvation. Glorification. The final step that occurs at death or the return of Christ.

Every moment we live brings one of these nearer. We may die tomorrow. Christ may return. We may not have a tomorrow to get our life right – to deal with sin, to start reading the word, to start serving and giving and praying. Paul knows, there is only today. Verse 12:

The night is far gone, the day is at hand.

The night of man's rebellion. The darkness of man's sin and unbelief *will* end. The day of God's glorious kingdom *is* at hand.

When it comes, how have you lived? When we stand before the bema seat of Christ and give an account of our life will our life be one of regrets.

"Oh Lord, I meant to stop sinning. I meant to stop seeking the things of this world. I meant to deal with the wasted time. I meant to spend more time with the kids. I meant

to get to homegroup. I meant to tell others about you. I meant to start loving others. I meant to get my life right. I really meant to. You just came too soon.”

Proverbs 27:1:

Do not boast about tomorrow,  
For you do not know what a day may bring forth.

Live for today.

When Jonathan Edwards was nineteen he began to write out his famous *Resolutions*. I want to read for you resolutions 17, 50 and 52:

17. *Resolved*, that I will live so, as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.

50. *Resolved*, I will act so as I think I shall judge would have been best, and most prudent, when I come into the future world. *July 5, 1723*.

52. I frequently hear persons in old age, say how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: *Resolved*, that I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age. *July 8, 1723*.

Jonathan Edwards took these words of Paul seriously. *Resolved*, that I will live so, as I shall wish I had done when I come to die. That should be the cry of us all.

Life is short. Judgment is certain. Live as children of God. Live a no regret life while we can. For our time in this world is short.

The end of verse 12:

So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light.

These must have been hard words for Paul to write. He is writing to Christians, to believers. But, believers still sin. They clothe themselves with the works of darkness. They allow themselves to be conformed to this world.

Paul implores – lay aside the deeds of darkness! Instead put on the armour of light. Do it while you can.

This is the same type of imagery he uses in Colossians 3:8-13.

We are to put off the old self – the way we were prior to salvation. And we put on the likeness of Christ. Remove the rags of sin. Put on the garment of holiness.

Romans 13:13:

Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.



These are but examples of the behaviour we are to avoid. These things typify the eat, drink and be merry attitude of the world. Seeking the pleasures of the flesh. These are not how one presenting his body as a sacrifice lives.

We have to say no to being conformed to the world. Say no to greed and lust and drunkenness.

We have a task to do. It is living for Christ and proclaiming Christ.

Instead, verse 14:

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Day by day, moment by moment we are to fight the flesh and put on Christ. Read the Word. Meditate on it. Pray. Seek the things above. Put on Christ.

And make no provision for the flesh. This word provision is a word that refers to thought and planning.

Every sin starts as a thought. Every wrong deed grows from a thought that was not dealt with.

When we don't beat the thought into submission it grows and gathers strength. Finally, it becomes too much for us and we give in and feed the flesh.

We have all been there. We have sinned – again! We have promised God to deal with the sin. But we don't take the steps to deal with the sin. We don't put on the Lord Jesus. We don't arm ourselves for the battle.

We tell ourselves that we will do it – soon. But soon doesn't seem to come and there we are fighting the sin hand to hand wondering where it sprang from.

Paul says – today is the day to beat it to death. If you don't act now, you won't have the strength to act then.

Brothers and sisters – we are a race of procrastinators. If we don't act – our lives of quite desperation will slip away – and at the end it will be too late. Decide to live for Christ today.

One day an expert on the subject of time management was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, he used an illustration those students will never forget.

As this man stood in front of the group of high-powered over-achievers he said, "Okay, time for a quiz." Then he pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouthed mason jar and set it on a table in front of him. Then he produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Everyone in the class said, "Yes." Then he said, "Really?" He reached under the table and pulled out a

bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks.

Then he smiled and asked the group once more, "Is the jar full?" By this time the class was onto him. "Probably not," one of them answered. "Good!" he replied. And he reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand.

He started dumping the sand in and it went into all the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, "Is this jar full?"

"No!" the class shouted. Once again he said, "Good!" Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked up at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?"

One eager beaver raised his hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard, you can always fit some more things into it!"

"No," the speaker replied, "that's *not* the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all."

If you don't put the big rocks into your life you will never fit them in.

If you don't put in quiet times and ministry times and family times.

If you don't make time to deal with sin.

If you don't put your life right today – then tomorrow, or the day after or fifty years from now – you may stand before God saying,

"Oh Lord, I meant to stop sinning. I meant to stop seeking the things of this world. I meant to deal with the wasted time. I meant to get to homegroup. I meant to tell others about you. I meant to start loving others. I meant to get my life right. I really meant to. You just came too soon."

A child of God lives for the Lord today – not plans to live for the Lord tomorrow.

An unknown poet wrote these challenging words:

When I stand at the judgment seat of Christ,  
And He shows me His plan for me,  
The plan of my life as it might have been,  
And I see how I blocked Him here,  
And checked him there,  
And would not yield my will.  
Will there be grief in my Saviour's eyes?  
Grief though He loves me still?  
He would have me rich,  
But I stand there poor,  
Stripped of all but His grace,  
While memory runs like a haunting thing,

Down a path I can't retrace;  
Then my desolate heart,  
Will well near break,  
With tears I cannot shed.  
I will cover my face with my empty hands,  
I will bow my uncrowned head.  
O Lord, of the years that are left to me,  
I give them to Your hand.  
Take me and break me and mould me,  
To the pattern You have planned.

May this be the prayer of our hearts and lives.