

**Characterized by Grace**  
*Love One Another*

In the mid-1800s, Texas rancher **Samuel Augustus Maverick** refused to brand his cattle. When **neighboring cowboys** came upon a **calf without a brand**, they called it a "**maverick**." The word entered the English language and came to refer to a person who takes an independent stand and refuses to conform.

**Judas** and **Benedict Arnold** both mean "**traitor**." An **Einstein** is a **genius**, A **Solomon** is a wise man. (David McCasland, Our Daily Bread, March 22, 2004)

**Who you are** and **what you do** speaks volumes. It IDENTIFIES you.  
**The same is true of a church.** The BEREANS, THESSALONIANS, CORINTHIANS

I would like to **challenge FAITH BIBLE CHURCH** that our ministry would be strengthened if we were **CHARACTERIZED by GRACE**.  
**NEW SERIES from ROMANS 13:8-15:13 "CHARACTERIZED by GRACE"**

I've chosen **GRACE** instead of **LOVE** because **GRACE** gives us the idea of **ACTION**

**WHY is it so important to be Characterized by Grace?**  
**Because believers who have a HIGH REGARD for the authority of Scripture often become judgmental. Lacking in Love.**

**James and John** regarding the **SAMARITANS** *"When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" (Luke 9:54)*

**The PHARISEES.** *"Jesus replied, "And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them." (Luke 11:46)*

**The CHURCH in ROME.** *"Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy." (Romans 13:13)*

**The CHURCH at GALATIA.** *"You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Gal 5:13-14)*

**WHEN the PASTOR is hammering away on sin, good Christians like to say PREACH IT, BROTHER!** We are happy as long as it is **someone else's sin**.  
**SELDOM** do we **see our own sin** when it comes to **LOVING OTHERS**.  
**SELDOM** do we **see our own sin** when it comes to not **JUDGING OTHERS**.

**Our EGO'S** work overtime to protect our own image.

After being **fired for the fourth time**, we say *"man, I can't believe how hostile employers are now days!"* After **ruining relationship after relationship** we say *"it's a shame that people just don't know how to get along!"*

**Because our PRIMARY DISPOSITION toward OTHERS is GRACE**

**Our PRIMARY DISPOSITION toward GOD is HOLINESS**

**God's HIS primary disposition toward us is Grace!**

*(Psalm 103:8-10) "The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities."*

*(Lamentations 3:22-23) "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."*

*(John 3:16) "For God so LOVED the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

**We are to TREAT OTHERS the way God has treated us!** (John 13:34) *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."*

We cannot extend GRACE to GOD. He needs nothing!

We can only extend GRACE to other sinners. And that is what we are. Sinners.

**What does ROMANS 13:8-10 say about Grace?**

**Our series, "Characterized by Grace" will cover Romans 13:8-15:13**

**CONTEXT. Google Earth our text. As we "zoom out," from our text, we see the context of Romans 12-16, the practical section of Romans. Throughout these chapters, loving others is the spiritual outflow of a person who has been made righteous by faith, and has hence surrendered his or her life to God as a living sacrifice.**

**Present yourselves to God. 12:1**

**Show love to one another through the gifts He has given. 12:3**

**Love one another. 12:9 (29 separate commands)**

**Live at peace with the ruling authorities. 13:1-7**

**The centrality of Love. 13:8-14**

**Warning against Judging other Christians. 14:1-15:13**

Paul demonstrates his love for the Romans. 15:14-33

Testimony of other loving believers from around the world. 16

Rom 13:8-10 is the CORE of this theme of loving others.

**ZOOMING back IN on our text, we see that...**

Love is a debt. 13:8

Same Greek word ὀφειλάς in 13:7 (“owe), and 13:8 (“remain”).

Connected to the debt we owe to the governing authorities

This means that we owe LOVE to everyone

(1 John 4:7-8) *"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."*

Not a prohibition against any form of borrowing. Scripture governs the lending and borrowing of money. (Ex 22:25; Lev 25:35-37; De 15:7-9; Neh 5:7; Ps 15:5; 37:21, 26; Eze 22:12; Mt 5:42; Lu 6:34). The emphasis here is that we must pay what we owe, and LOVE is what we owe to everyone.

Love fulfills the Law. 13:8b-9

4 of the 6 commands governing human relationships

Omitted: “Honor father and mother,” “do not bear false witness”

Love will not harm another. 13:10

This is only true when we are living according to God’s standards

Love is based on TRUTH. (Romans 12:9) *"Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good."*

It is not LOVING to overlook sin.

It is not LOVING to withhold the gospel.

It is not LOVING to fail to discipline or warn, or exhort....

**Does the TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE Confirm that LOVE should be our primary disposition toward others?**

**It is CONFIRMED in the PRACTICAL SECTION of ROMANS**

(Romans 12:3)

(Romans 12:9)

(Romans 12:14)

(Romans 12:17)

ALL of Chapter 14.

(Romans 15:5)

(Romans 15:7)

**The Centrality of LOVE is confirmed by JESUS.**

(Matthew 22:36-38) *“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: **“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”***

*ILLUS:* In May 2006, a man set out from base camp to make his **third attempt** on **Mount Everest**. He reached the summit, but **ran out of oxygen** on his way down. As he lay on the side of the mountain dying, **40 climbers passed him by**. Some say that at such oxygen-deprived altitudes, rescues are too perilous. But others say that climbers are too eager to reach the top and too selfish to help those in trouble. (Our Daily Bread, 5/7/08)

**If one of those 40 climbers would have *“loved their neighbor as they love themselves”* they would have stopped to help.**

**But JESUS took that command even further.**

**Loving our neighbor as we love ourselves is only surpassed by loving our neighbor as JESUS loved US. (John 13:34-35) *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”* Repeated in John 15:13-14**

**Loving others extends to the SAVED and the LOST. (Luke 6:27) *“But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,”***

## **The Centrality of Love is confirmed by James. James 2:8-13**

### **The Centrality of Love is confirmed by Paul.**

**Be devoted to one another. Romans 12:10**

**Live in harmony with one another. Rom 12:16**

**Love one another. Rom 13:8**

**Accept one another. Rom 15:7**

**Greet one another. Rom 16:16**

**Agree with one another. 1 Cor 1:10**

**Serve one another. Gal 5:13**

**Bear with one another. Eph 4:2**

**Be kind and compassionate to one another. Eph 4:32**

**Submit to one another. Eph 5:21**

**Forgive one another. Col 3:13**

**Encourage one another. 1 Thess 5:11**

The BEATLES wrote “All you Need is Love”

The World promotes LOVE without TRUTH. It cannot get you to heaven. But neither will TRUTH without LOVE. CHRISTIANS cannot settle for TRUTH without LOVE.

D L Moody said that...

A man may be a good doctor without loving his patients; a good lawyer without loving his clients; a good geologist without loving science; but he cannot be a good Christian without love. (Preceptaustin.org)

What characterizes you?

What characterizes Faith Bible Church?

We would do well, if the mention of our name brought GRACE and LOVE into view.