

### SERMON NOTES:

### QUESTIONS:

1. What was a highlight from your summer? And what is one thing God has been showing or teaching you lately?

2. In modern Western culture, the ideal gift comes with no strings attached — no obligation to repay the giver. But in Paul's world, gifts worked differently. A gift created an ongoing and deepening relationship between the giver and receiver. Say you take a friend out for dinner, and a few days later they surprise you with your favorite cookies. Neither of you is trying to settle a debt or become even; instead, you are becoming mutually indebted to one another in gratitude and friendship. This kind of ongoing exchange is called a gift economy. (See more →)

How does this idea help you understand Paul's phrase, "the continuing debt to love one another" in Romans 13:8?



3. Read Romans 13:10. This week, Joe explained that loving someone doesn't mean avoiding pain. God's commands teach us how love acts, and sometimes love means correcting, disciplining, saying "no," or setting boundaries. What do you think that looks like when disciplining a child or correcting a friend? How can you tell if a painful action is loving or harmful?
  
4. Read Luke 10:25–37. Joe explained that our neighbor is anyone in need of care and protection. Who is a person—or type of person—you find hardest to love? What would it look like to repay your debt of love to God by loving that person the way Jesus loved you? What's one practical thing you could do this week to begin to grow your love?

## PRACTICE:

When we think about helping people, we often ask, "What am I good at?" or "What are my spiritual gifts?" Those can be helpful questions, but love often starts somewhere simpler: **What is the need in front of me?**

The Good Samaritan wasn't trying to be the best rescuer or wondering whether hospitality was one of his spiritual gifts. He saw a need and met it. Take a minute and think about the places God has put you—your home, workplace, church, neighborhood, and community. *What needs do you see? And which of those needs do you feel drawn to respond to?*

Pray together about one way you could serve this fall, either individually or as a group. Below are some opportunities for you to consider!



COMMUNITY WEEK

Serve with your small group!



Serve at Faith!



Serve in the Lehigh Valley!