

Romans 12:3-21 Light in the Darkness

I. Romans – Gospel of the Righteousness of God

A. Rom 1-11 Theology of Salvation [slide 1]

B. Rom 9-11 The Israel Issue – past, present, and future.

C. Rom 12-16 Transformation: Full Devotion

Righteously engage opportunities [Engage-Influence-Vote]

Engagement precedes influence. [E-I-V slide 1]

Pray. Think. Vote. [E-I-V slide 2]

Don't be lazy! [E-I-V slide 3]

Policy, Politics, Personality [E-I-V slide 4]

Text “iVote” to 50457 [E-I-V slide 5]

II. Salvation’s Application —> Incarnate Love (Love looks like something)

A. Christianity in a Nutshell (Rom 12:1-2)

Ro 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, **by the mercies of God**, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is **your spiritual worship**. [slide 1]

Whole life commitment. Every moment of every day.

12:2 **Do not be conformed** to this world, but **be transformed by the renewal of your mind**, that by testing you may **discern** what is the **will of God**, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

[slide 2]

B. The *Gifted* Life (12:3-9)

Ro 12:3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in **one body** we have **many members**, and the members do not all have the same function,

All the parts form “**one body**,” and **each** part is **needed** for the body is to **function** as it should.

Ro 12:5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having **gifts** that **differ according** to the **grace given to us**, let us use them: if **prophecy**, in proportion to our faith; 7 if **service**, in our serving; the one who **teaches**, in his teaching; 8 the one who **exhorts**, in his exhortation; the one who **contributes**, in generosity; the one who **leads**, with zeal; the one who does **acts of mercy**, with cheerfulness.

If we are “in Christ” (v. 5), we are **IN his body**, inescapably **joined** to the other members of our local Christian community. We can no more separate from each other than an arm can decide it does not want anything to do with the torso or legs.

III. A Dozen Ways Grace Shines

A. **Genuine Love** is the center

Jn 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. 35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

We are the hands and feet of Jesus in the current age.

Gal 5:4 For the **whole law is fulfilled** in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Jam 2:8 If you really **fulfill the royal law** according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well.

B. To Walk in Genuine Love

DISTINGUISHES GOOD & EVIL

Ro 12:9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.

1. Abhor Evil

repulses, despises. Evil - corrupt from original intent

2. Hold on to Good

Be joined; Become part of...

HAS “ONE ANOTHER” ORIENTATION

12:10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.

3. Develop strong brotherly affection.

4. Outdo one another in showing honor

Challenge yourself! Get good at it.

SERVES THE LORD WITH ENERGY

12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.

5. Don't be lazy, Get moving!

6. Be set on fire by the Holy Spirit!

Boil - a state change due to more energy than can be held margin - “in **the** Spirit.”

7. Be “wholly owned” by Jesus!

NLT Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.

STAYS ON COURSE. NOT DISCOURAGED. NOT DISTRACTED

12:12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. [slide 3]

8. Rejoice in Hope Joyful Confidence in the Promises

9. Stand Your Ground under Pressure Grit in battle

10. Pray persistently

LOOKS FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE

12:13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

11. Share generously (*koinonieo*)

12. Pursue ways to welcome strangers

IV. Martial Art of Sincere Love

Basic moves, stances, and sequences basic to spiritual warfare

TRANSFORMATIONAL BLESSING

Rom 12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

1. Bless those who target you.

2. Never curse anyone. Curses can be broken. Blessings endure

ENGAGE IN LIVES OF OTHERS

12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

3. Share the Joy

4. Share the Sorrows

CULTIVATE HUMILITY

12:16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.

5. Look for ways to agree

The greatest obstacle is pride. Fear is #2. Shame is #3. Self-evaluate use 1Cor 13. Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, righteousness, judgments. Holy Spirit and Jesus are both interceding for us!

6. Don't be Arrogant

self-important, high and mighty

7. Make friends with “nobodies”; welcome menial tasks

Antidote for social climbing

God gives grace to the humble

8. Be teachable

Antidote for “I know what I’m doing.” I am right

AVOID EVIL'S CONTAGION

12:17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.

9. Don't "Get Even"

10. Look for ways to improve situations.

Opportunities to be a good example!

TPT — plan your life around the noblest way to benefit others.

12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. [slide 4]

11. Live as a friend toward all (whenever possible)

They may not like you, but maintain your stance as friend

12:19 **Beloved**, never avenge yourselves, but **leave it** to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." [slide 5]

12. Identity — BELOVED

13. Allow the "Godfather" to settle accounts

Our perspective is too small. Saul of Tarsus!

Gen 12:3

12:20 To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."

14. Look for ways to Love your enemies in practical ways

Show kindness to enemies with the hope that they will become ashamed of their actions and seek the underlying reason why we can respond with such love.

Did Stephen's prayer echo in Saul's conscience?

12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but **overcome** evil with good.

15. **Don't be conquered, don't become a victim.**

16. **Conquer evil with goodness**

IV. Impartation: Skill (חָכְמָה *hakma*) in Love's Warfare

Love aims for Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happy-Blessedness

You've got a river of life, flowing out of your spirit! Makes the lame to walk and the blind to see, opens prison doors, sets the captives free!

In all these things, we are MORE than Conquerors — We are liberators!
"As One!"

Acts 4:29 And **now**, Lord, **look** upon their threats and **grant** to your servants to **continue to speak your word with all boldness**, 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

You shall go out with joy and be led forth in peace; The mountains and the hills
Shall break forth into singing before you,
And all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

PRAYER — **BOLDNESS** w **MERCY** **POWER** w **LOVE**