

I. Intro

A. Recap: The Unfolding of the Master's Plan

1. **Rom. 1-8**: The power of God is in the Gospel
 - a. **Rom. 1:16-17**: *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Gentile. For in it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith"*
 - i. Righteousness of God revealed: From Faith to Faith
 - ii. The power for healing and deliverance and deliverance
 - b. The manifestation of the move of God is based upon the gospel.
 - i. **Mk. 16:15-18**: *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues... they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."*
2. **Rom. 9-11**: There is not another gospel (Jew vs. Gentile).
 - a. The message of salvation has not changed from Old Testament to the New Testament.
 - b. Old Testament saints were saved by grace through faith.
 - c. New Testament saints were saved by grace through faith.
 - i. Abraham believed God and it was credited to him for righteousness. (**Gen. 15:6**)

- d. Message of the gospel has always been to the Jew first and then to the Gentile.
- e. God has a masterplan that has always and always will include the first fruits: Jewish people.
- 3. **Rom. 12:16**: Now Walk it Out with others who believe.
 - a. **Rom. 12:1-2**: It's gonna be a radical move of God.
 - i. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice.
 - ii. Renew your mind

Conformed (suschematizo #4964): to be fashioned according to the external surroundings.

Transformed (metamorhoo #3339): to change the outside and bring it in alignment with the inner-reality.

- b. **Rom. 12:3-9**: We (together) are the body of Christ.
 - i. If you've got a gift (according to grace), use it.
 - ii. Use it to build your brother/sister up.
 - iii. Gift is not for you.
 - iv. Your gift is designed for new family that you've been born into
 - v. Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry out "Abba" (**Rom. 8:15**)

II. Responding to the Love of God

A. Love well.

⁹*Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. (Rom. 12:9)*

- 1. Love without dissimulation.

Dissimulation (anupokritos #505): (a) the opposite of pretending, originally referred to the art of acting (but in an experienced way). Without hypocrisy. Sincere.

- a. Hate evil the way God does. Love good like God does.
 - i. God declared war on evil.

- ii. God passionately opposes everything that would hinder us from authentic relationship with Him.
- b. Our love for one another is NOT natural.
 - i. We are not lovable beings.
 - ii. Our love one for another is not based upon our own goodness, nor the goodness of the one we love on.
- 2. We are able to love because we've first encountered love.
 - a. **1 John 4:19:** ¹⁹ *We love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19)*
 - i. Not commanding you to love more. You can't measure up to this type of love by trying harder.
 - b. Unconquerable Love Apprehended Us

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38-39)

 - i. When this love takes over us... overpowers us...overflows us... it spreads out to others.
 - ii. Love is not a discipline that's spiritual. It's a fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control)!
- 3. Love displayed community reflects our love for God.

1 John 4:12: ²⁰ *If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?*

- i. Ex: "I Love you but can't stand your wife."

¹⁰ *Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. (Rom. 12:10)*

- a. Be devoted to one another (in love)
- b. Develop a culture of honor.
 - i. Love enough to cover in weaknesses.
 - ii. Love enough to cover in prayer.
 - iii. Love enough to look out for your good instead of worrying about my own.

¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. (Rom. 12:11)

- b. Serving the Lord together.
 - i. Keeping spiritually fit together.
 - ii. Maintaining zeal for serving one another
 - iii. Stay filled up because your brother might need a drink.
 - iv. Stay with a word in your spirit because your brother or sister might need it.
 - v. Because of love, we are quick to serve each other's needs.

¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. (Rom. 12:11)

- c. Rejoicing together while waiting (with certain anticipation)
- d. Patient together as tribulation (pressure, crushing, squeezing) is endured.
- e. Constantly on the prayer line, because your sister might have a weakness exposed.

B. Hospitality Demonstrates the Gospel

¹³ Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. (Rom. 12:13)

- 1. To effectively proclaim the gospel, we first have to demonstrate the gospel.
 - a. No better way to display the mystery of the gospel than to take care of other people in ways that they could never have earned.

2. Hospitality is a constant expectation in the Bible.
 - a. He who desires the office of a bishop, desires a good thing.
 - i. Couple of requirements.
 - ii. Is he hospitable? (**1 Tim. 3:2**)
 - b. Honor the widows who are really widows. Take care of them.
 - i. Couple of requirements.
 - ii. Do they have a track record of serving others AND being hospitable? (**1 Tim. 5:3-10**)
 - c. **Heb. 13:1-2:** Let brotherly love continue. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers.
 - d. **1 Pet. 4:8-10:** And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins”. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.
3. Question: How can we make disciples if we aren’t inviting people into our space?
 - a. Hospitality is a must if our passion is to make disciples.
 - i. Discipleship cannot be done inside of a church service or a Bible study.
 - ii. Discipleship is done by experiencing life together.
 - iii. Missional Community

C. Longsuffering is the Standard for Growing together

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

1. Bless, Whether they Bless you Back or Not

Bless (eulogeo #2127): *to speak well of, to speak kindly and affectionately to.*

- a. Most of us have a real problem with this one.

- i. Ex.: "I ain't gonna just let you talk to me any kind of way."
- b. Responsibility for protection, justice and retribution is all in my hands.

¹⁵ *Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.* ¹⁶ *Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.* (**Rom. 12:15-16**)

- 2. Real fellowship will test where you really stand with God.
 - a. If we have appreciate His grace, we extend it to others.
 - i. The church is the practice field to work out how much we really love God, by loving His people.
 - b. We've been called to suffer long with each other.
 - i. **Matt. 5:40-41:** *⁴⁰If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. ⁴¹And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.*

¹⁷ *Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.* ¹⁸ *If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.* (**Rom. 12:17-18**)

- 3. Longsuffering/ Refusal to pursue revenge will not necessarily ensure that your adversary will repent.
 - a. You just make sure you've done everything you can to make for peace.
 - b. All of Jesus' enemies didn't respond positively to His love and longsuffering for them.
 - i. One thief repented and the other cursed him.
 - ii. Peter repented. Judas hung himself.

¹⁹ *Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.* ²⁰ *On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In*

doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Rom. 12:19-21)

4. Problems with Vengeance?

“Are you a Christian? Then you are the follower of one who died for his enemies. Are you not a Christian? Then you are being pursued by one who died for his enemies—Jesus Christ. In fact, your presence here is part of his design to overcome the enmity between you and him, and bring you to himself.” (Charles Bridges)

- a. Call to love enemies is based on what Christ did for us.
 - i. Christ loved us (died for us) while we were still enemies with him.
 - ii. He overcame our insubordination and self-centeredness with His great good toward us: His death and resurrection.

5. Heap coals on your adversary’s head

- a. Interpretations
 - i. Rub it in.
 - ii. Custom of coal heater needing to be re-lit.
 - iii. Swell up their opportunity to repent, ultimately leading them to repentance OR a very well-deserved judgment.
- b. Overcome good with evil:
 - i. You triumph through the repentance of your enemy or you triumph through the judgment of your enemy.
- c. Our desire for our enemies is no different than Paul’s desire for Israel in Rom. 10:1:
 - i. *“My heart’s desire and prayer is for [them] is that they may be saved.” (Rom. 10:1)*
