



A Biblical Vision For A Healthy Local Church

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Genuine Christian Community and Relational Vitality

Here at HCC we have embarked together in a life-long expedition in the Christian Faith; learning together with all the saints around the globe what it means to know and grow in the grace & knowledge of Jesus Christ! (*2 Peter 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*)

We shall, by the grace of God, have one – and only one - preaching and teaching series that will last throughout the entire days God has us together in this life!

We will always only have one series here:

A Biblical Vision For A Healthy Local Church

This vision from God, which comes from God through the Bible, is about growing, learning, following, and cherishing Jesus! He is the Hero around here. This is His church NOT mine...and not yours...It is His! And He has given the marching orders, the recipe, the prescription for His local and global body throughout the centuries...and right down to this very day! Through His sin-atonement death and life-giving resurrection...FOR YOU...we are brought into His agenda for the times and seasons in which we live!

Of course this series will come to us in many ways and through various means: sermons, Bible studies, prayer occasions, fellowship opportunities, AND in the course of life, as Paul wrote to the Thessalonians “*So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us. (1 Thessalonians 2:8)*”

So, for this morning, we want to look at yet another aspect of this God-vision for our fellowship under the heading of a:

1. Genuine
2. Christian
3. Community
4. &
5. Relational
6. Vitality

But for this morning, let's consider:

HORSE & BUGGY PICTURE



“They’re Back”

We, @ HCC are a gathering of Christians (& non-Christians)

The Biblical picture of this gathering is for health and vitality...the very health & vitality of God among us, in us, and through us!

In order to know and experience this kind of health, we must understand what God, in Jesus has done for us: The power of the Gospel to save, keep and bring to the DAY OF ETERNITY!
THIS IS the “HORSE-POWER”!

This is the life-raising (from the dead) kind of power. This comes from God promising you mercy instead of just judgment for your sin. This comes through forgiveness.

ARE YOU FORGIVEN OF YOUR SIN BY GOD? How do you know?

And we must grow in learning how it is that this “Horse-Power” of God propels the Christian life. How this truth impacts your life...THIS IS THE BUGGY!

How does the “butter” of God truth, God’s word (theology) get into all the knooks & crannies of life? How does truth impact life? How does grace produce good works?

Let’s feast...for man does not live on muffins alone...but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God!

So, as you consider the words just read by Dave in Romans 12, I want to survey this morning this passage and several others like it.

Note:

1. Romans 12-16 follows Romans 1-11 (Theology, truth...goes before practice) Concerning the great subject of the Book of Romans, a lot of truth comes before a lot of practice! Take special notice of “therefore” and “for”.
2. Humility is the first ingredient God addresses when speaking of spiritual gifting! Pride is your #1 enemy! (*Romans 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.*
3. What the Gospel of Jesus Christ has created! *Romans 12:4-8* *For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, (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.

More statements of truth and description...not getting to “doing” yet!

4. Let Gospel life flow!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Romans 12:9-21 Let love be genuine.

Abhor what is evil;

hold fast to what is good.

(10) Love one another with brotherly affection.

Outdo one another in showing honor.

(11) Do not be slothful in zeal,

be fervent in spirit,

serve the Lord.

(12) Rejoice in hope,

be patient in tribulation,

be constant in prayer.

(13) Contribute to the needs of the saints

and seek to show hospitality.

(14) Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

(15) Rejoice with those who rejoice,

weep with those who weep.

(16) Live in harmony with one another.

Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be conceited.

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

(18) If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

(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."

(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."

(21) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

What do we have here?

23 commands! Staggering!

These are the aromas of the Kingdom of God...on earth **AS** it is in Heaven!

I could go on to list other lists like this. For example:

58 “one another’s” in the NT (many of them to “love one another”) ⁱ

Let alone the descriptive passages that tell us what love is, like:

1 Corinthians 13: 4-8 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant (5) or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; (6) it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. (7) Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (8) Love never ends...



or the “fruit of the Spirit”

Galatians 5: 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

A Massive calling!

So, how are you doing, measured up to this?

Do you see these commands as a ladder to climb up to God...to get His love to you IF you just obey His word thinking you're suppose to “try your best and God will do the rest”?

Or does this list show you something about yourself! Your shortcoming? Your sin? Your inability to meet God's standard?

Well if this last statement is true of you...then there's hope!

There is One who kept this kind of standard! He lived in the fullness of these commands, inside and out!

With all His heart, mind, soul, strength.

With His intent, motivation, action...morning, noon, night...every day from birth to His death!

And it is His death, for us, that absorbs the wrath of God against your law-breaking, secures your forgiveness and empowers you to live life by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus in you!

These are not commands for the Christian...these are part of the magnificent list of the promises of God that He will do for you, in you and to others through you.

Bow down and give thanks to God for Jesus Christ!

AMEN!

ⁱ (Mark 9:50) Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

(John 13:14) If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

(John 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.

(John 13:35) By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

(John 15:12) "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

(John 15:17) These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

(Acts 21:6) and said farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

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

(Romans 12:16) Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be conceited.

(Romans 14:13) Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.

(Romans 15:5) May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus,

(Romans 15:7) Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

(Romans 15:14) I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another.

(Romans 16:16) Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

(1 Corinthians 6:7) To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?

(1 Corinthians 7:5) Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

Contemporary English Version 1Co 7:5 So don't refuse sex to each other, unless you agree not to have sex for a little while, in order to spend time in prayer. Then Satan won't be able to tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

(1 Corinthians 11:33) So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another--

(1 Corinthians 12:25) that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

(1 Corinthians 16:20) All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

(2 Corinthians 13:11) Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

(2 Corinthians 13:12) Greet one another with a holy kiss.

(Galatians 5:13) For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

(Galatians 5:15) But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

(Galatians 5:26) Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

(Galatians 6:2) Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

(Ephesians 4:2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

(Ephesians 4:32) Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

(Ephesians 5:19) addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart,

(Ephesians 5:21) submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

(Colossians 3:9) Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices

(Colossians 3:13) bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

(Colossians 3:16) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

(1 Thessalonians 3:12) and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you,

(1 Thessalonians 4:9) Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to **love one another**,

(1 Thessalonians 4:18) Therefore **encourage one another with these words**.

(1 Thessalonians 5:11) Therefore **encourage one another and build one another up**, just as you are doing.

(1 Thessalonians 5:15) See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but **always seek to do good to one another and to everyone**.

(2 Thessalonians 1:3) We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and **the love of every one of you for one another is increasing**.

^CONTRAST

(Titus 3:3) For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, **hated by others and hating one another**.

(Hebrews 3:13) But **exhort one another every day**, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

(Hebrews 10:24) And let us **consider how to stir up one another to love and good works**,

(Hebrews 10:25) **not neglecting to meet together**(with one another), as is the habit of some, but **encouraging one another**, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

(James 4:11) **Do not speak evil against one another**, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

(James 5:9) **Do not grumble against one another**, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.

(James 5:16) Therefore, **confess your sins to one another** and **pray for one another**, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

(1 Peter 1:22) Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, **love one another earnestly from a pure heart**,

(1 Peter 4:8) Above all, **keep loving one another earnestly**, since love covers a multitude of sins.

(1 Peter 4:9) **Show hospitality to one another without grumbling**.

(1 Peter 4:10) As each has received a gift, use it to **serve one another**, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

(1 Peter 5:5) Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. **Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another**, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

(1 Peter 5:14) **Greet one another** with the kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

(1 John 1:7) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have **fellowship with one another**, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

(1 John 3:11) For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should **love one another**.

(1 John 3:23) And this is his commandment, that we (1) believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and (2) **love one another**, just as he has commanded us.

(1 John 4:7) Beloved, let us **love one another**, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

(1 John 4:11) Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to **love one another**.

(1 John 4:12) No one has ever seen God; if we **love one another**, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

(2 John 1:5) And now I ask you, dear lady--not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning--that we **love one another**.

Acts 2:41-47 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (42) And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (43) And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. (44) And all who believed were together and had all things in common. (45) And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. (46) And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, (47) praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 4:32-37 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. (33) And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. (34) There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold (35) and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. (36) Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, (37) sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.