

**Title:** Gospel-Shaped Relationships

**Passage:** Romans 1: 8-17

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Summary:

Characteristics of Gospel-Shaped Relationships

I. Thankful heart

II. Genuine faith in God

III. Prayer for each other

IV. Desire to see each other in person and mutually encourage each other.

V. Desire to share the Gospel with others

Passage: Romans 1:8-15

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Key Truths:

- Be appreciative and be an encourager of everything you have and that occurs. Why? All comes from Jesus Christ.
- Obedient faith is living radically in an ordinary world. Until you are ready to die for Christ, you are not living for Him.
- True fellowship happens in-person and around God's Word and a common understanding of God's Word.
- All need to hear the Gospel regardless of status and background. We need to reach out to the lost who do not know about Jesus.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
- Do you have a thankful heart? How so?
- How are your personal ethics different than the world around you? How is your faith different than your neighbor who is Muslim or Mormon?
- What difference may next Sunday be if you have the mindset to encourage others or allow others to speak into your life?
- How can we invite others to come hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
- What next steps will you take in response to the sermon?

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**Introduction**

People are not looking for friendly churches but they are looking for friends.

- Despite social media, many people are lonely.
- Over time, there's been a startling fall in quality friendships.
  - As of 2019, 20% of Americans felt lonely. Since then, creased to 30%.
- Adverse impacts:
  - People without good friends die younger.
  - Feeling socially isolated reduced longevity similar to obesity and smoking
  - Loneliness predicts fatigue and depression

### Genesis 2:18

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

- This applies to both men and women. We all need relationships.
- What's the best type of community?
  - Through the church, based on the eternal message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What relationships shaped by the Gospel looks like.

### **Passage:**

#### Romans 1:8-17

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

### **EXPOSITION**

#### **Overview**

Characteristics of Gospel-Shaped Relationships

I. Thankful heart

II. Genuine faith in God

III. Prayer for each other

IV. Desire to see each other in person and mutually encourage each other.

V. Desire to share the Gospel to others

#### **I. A THANKFUL HEART**

##### **Romans 1:8a**

***First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you***

*First*

- of highest priority

*I thank my God*

- thankful heart
- Contrast: some may perceive that they have the “gift” of criticism
  - Always focusing on the bad and negative or cannot point out what is good.

*through Jesus Christ*

- salvation is only through Him.
- Anything good we have is only because of Jesus
  - What He has done and is doing.

James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

- Be an encourager and appreciative
  - Why? Everything comes from God.
- Do you have a thankful heart?
  - If not, examine your heart.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

## **II. BASED ON TRUE, GENUINE FAITH IN GOD.**

**Romans 1:8b**

***because your faith is proclaimed in all the world.  
in all the world.***

- not literal meaning where everyone in the world knew of their faith.
- Truth: the faith of the church in Rome was shared and known by others

Romans 1:5

through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations,

- Genuine faith is not merely belief only but also includes obedience.
- Martin Luther: “You are saved by faith alone but saving faith is never alone.”
  - Genuine faith comes with a transformed heart from within, which brings about the fruit of the Spirit of external change.
  - Contrast: people say they believe in Jesus but as a means to another end
    - Want to be part of a community

- Sense of peace and comfort
- Jesus is the ultimate focus and goal.
  - Through faith, we get to be in a relationship with Him.
  - Through faith, we get to spend eternity with Him.
    - Not we get to heaven and Jesus happens to be there. Not me-focused but Christ-focused.

Caution: people can manufacture the works of the Spirit but not faith.

Matthew 7:21-23

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

- one can “play” the Christian life with nothing genuine from within.
- Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can transform hearts.

*because your faith is proclaimed*

- The Christians were exceptional as to how they reflected their faith.
- Are your personal ethics different than the world around you? Is your faith different than your neighbor who is Muslim or Mormon?
- Obedient faith is living radically in an ordinary world.
  - How? Sacrificially love on a day to day basis.
    - Work as unto God under bad supervisors.
    - Be a boss unlike anyone else.
    - Be a citizen with integrity.
    - Parent with perseverance and love.

**III. PRAYER FOR EACH OTHER**

Romans 1:9-10

***For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you.***

- How pray?
  - Often and intentional
- Context: Paul did not plant the church in Rome, yet became one of the most influential ones in the Roman Empire.

*I mention you always in my prayers*

- Be intentional in prayers

- Pray locally and internationally
  - Pray for other ministries
  - Pray for other countries

Pray more often for churches in strategic locations especially throughout the United States.

- Paul prayed for the church in Rome because it was a key place in the Roman Empire.
  - Likewise, pray for the churches in the influential cities (New York City, Los Angeles, Hollywood, Washington, D.C.)

#### IV. Desire to see each other in person and mutually encourage each other.

##### **Romans 1:11-13**

***For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles.***

*For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you*

- Not mean actual giving of spiritual gifts, which is only by the Holy Spirit.
- Meaning: sharing life with others about the implications of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - Context: Turmoil between Jew and Gentiles Christians.
    - Truth: in Christ, all part of the family of God.

*that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.*

- This means fellowship with one another, which is based on Jesus.
  - Not merely socializing
- True fellowship is about God and about the Gospel and at the center of your conversations.
- True fellowship happens in-person and around God's Word and a common understanding of God's Word.
  - Contrast: you are lying to yourself if you gather with other Christians but have a different lifestyle.

*I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented),*

- There may be circumstances that prevent in-person fellowship: sick or circumstances that otherwise prevent attendance.
- Your in-person presence is about you giving a gift to others.
  - Mutual blessing of Biblical fellowship.
    - Mutually encouraging one another to be known and know others.

## V. A DESIRE TO SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH OTHERS.

### Romans 1:14-15

*I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.*

- Paul felt indebted to share the Gospel of Jesus to others.

*both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish*

- Two main kinds of people:
  - Greeks/wise: represent the highest of the Roman Empire.
  - Barbarians/foolish: represent the simpleton's of society.
- Truth: All need to hear the Gospel of Jesus regardless of background or status or type.
- We need to reach out to those who do not know about Jesus.
- Question: How can we invite others to come hear the Gospel?

## APPLICATIONS

Christians:

- What difference would next Sunday be if you are to encourage others?
  - Look for ways to know others.
  - Ways to encourage others
  - Open your heart to others.
- Do you allow the words of others to encourage you?
  - Allow yourself to be vulnerable to speak to your life.
    - For your good and growth.

Non-Christian:

- Only place where can find genuine, loving relationships is through the church.
  - What other community is based upon loving one another regardless of one's background.
  - No church is perfect but only way to have true fellowship is to walk in the light along with others.