



# The Gospel & Relationships

## Friendships ~ Singleness ~ Romance ~ Sexuality

*How Can You Have Lasting, Satisfying Relationships?*

Outline of Content:

### ***The Basis of Quality Relationships***

- The Relationships We Need
- The Friend that make friendships possible
- An Incendiary Community

### ***Gospel-Centered Friendships***

- Becoming Gospel-Centered
- Gospel Renewal Stories
- Becoming “Fluent” in the Gospel

### ***Friendships & “Dating”***

- How the Gospel Affects Romance
- Friendships with the opposite sex
- Wise and Foolish Dating

### ***Sex, Singleness & Marriage***

- What is Sex For?
- Being Single & Content
- “Special” Friendships -> Considering Marriage



# Gospel-Centered Friendships

## The Good News (a.k.a. the “Gospel”)

- *“God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself” 2 Cor 5:19*
- *“Him...we proclaim...so that you may have fellowship with us, and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.” 1 John 1:3*


God created you so that you could have fellowship with him and with others.

- Glorify Him by enjoying Him – 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment
- Glorify Him by serving others – 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment
- The Gospel calls you deeper into the heart of God than you thought!
- The Gospel calls you deeper into the heart of hurting world of others than you thought!



## Gospel-Centered Friendships

*A “Gospel-centered friendship” is where two or more people come together to have fellowship with Jesus, knowing they need to repeatedly turn from trusting other people or things, and turn back to trusting in Jesus and His work for them on the Cross, to find in Him the Friendship that makes all friendships possible!*



# The Basis of Quality Friendships

Friendship with Jesus  
is the basis of all  
quality friendships!

But, I keep forgetting  
this! I keep treating  
others and things as  
more important than  
Jesus!

Being centered on  
these things brings  
brokenness & death  
to my relationships  
and all of life!

I need friendships  
with people who  
want to  
remember, over  
and over, that  
Jesus is The Friend  
that makes all  
friendships  
possible!

These kinds of  
friendships, we  
will call,  
**Gospel**  
**Centered**  
**Friendships.**

## Acts 20:36-21:8

And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. <sup>37</sup> And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, <sup>38</sup> being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.

And when we had parted from them and set sail, we came by a straight course to Cos, and the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. <sup>2</sup> And having found a ship crossing to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail. <sup>3</sup> When we had come in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left we sailed to Syria and landed at Tyre, for there the ship was to unload its cargo.

<sup>4</sup> And having sought out the disciples, we stayed there for seven days. And through the Spirit they were telling Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. <sup>5</sup> When our days there were ended, we departed and went on our journey, and they all, with wives and children, accompanied us until we were outside the city. And kneeling down on the beach, we prayed <sup>6</sup> and said farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

- <sup>7</sup> When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais, and we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for one day. <sup>8</sup> On the next day we departed and came to Caesarea, and we entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him.



# Gospel-Centered Friendships

Gospel-centered  
Friendships are needed.

Paul's life – crushing trials

– “... the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.” Acts 20:23

- Yet, Paul is surrounded by friends! Tells us what?
- To need & want deep spiritual friends is not a sign of immaturity, illness or weakness, but a sign of health!
- Like Adam in Genesis 2, “it is not good for the man to be alone.”
- All other “aches” are not good – are from sin!
- But we were made for relationships – can't enjoy life as God created it without friends!

# Gospel-Centered Friendships

Gospel-centered Friendships are discovered, not just made.

Paul didn't start Tyre church

Probably meeting him for 1<sup>st</sup> time

Paul lets them speak into his life

Instant friendship made around common passion

"Do you love the same truth?"

Centered on Jesus, become friends despite who you used to be

music, dress, ethnicity, language, hobbies, sexual identity – no longer the things that "define" you.

Friendships come from what you are in love with

Want more friends? Seek God first (Matt 6:33)

Become more secure in Christ, and become more attractive to others

# Gospel-Centered Friendships are made, not just discovered.

God gives resources – we must spend them on others

- “I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls” 2 Cor 12:15

In Acts 20:36 – shared feelings and decisions

- *“And having sought out the disciples, we stayed there for seven days. And through the Spirit they were telling Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.”* Acts 21:4 - The disciples were saying “Don’t go!”
- *“And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, <sup>23</sup> except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.”* Acts 20:22 – Paul sensed the Holy Spirit saying “Go!”

- When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> Then Paul answered, “What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” <sup>14</sup> And since he would not be persuaded, we ceased and said, “Let the will of the Lord be done.” Acts 21:12-14
- “As Iron sharpens Iron, so one man sharpens another.” – Pr 27:17

# Gospel-Centered Friendships are Forever!

- And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. <sup>37</sup> And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, <sup>38</sup> being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship. Acts 20:36-38
- Eastern religion – die... move on to new dimension
- Material secularism – die... you rot, it's over
- Christian faith – die... eternal fellowship with God
  - “This is eternal life, that they know you, the One true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” John 17:3