

Celebrating Gospel-centered Relationships, Part 2
Date: 6/12/16

Read Together

Read the Scripture and overview below before your Life Group meets.

Scripture passage: Acts 20:32-38

As we continue Paul's farewell to the Ephesians in Acts 20, we will look at three additional points concerning Gospel-centered relationships—sanctification, grace, and generosity. These three areas of the Christian faith are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they work together, bringing believers to Christ-like maturity. At the very heart of this process, Gospel-centered relationships help to shape and mold believers into godly men and women of the faith who love as Jesus loved.

One final benefit of Gospel-centered relationships is the support given during transition and hard times. The difficult lessons of love and loss are learned as we look beyond ourselves and focus on others. As we “go there” with other believers in Christ, through good times and bad, we testify to the grace of Jesus Christ in our lives and the hope we have in Him.

Pray Together

Use the first few minutes of your lesson to lead your group in a focused prayer time.

- **Praise:** Spend time praising God for who He is.
- **Repent:** Take a few moments to silently confess any sin that is lingering in your heart.
- **Ask:** Verbalize your needs and the needs of others to God.
- **Yield:** Surrender your will to God.

Discuss Together

Use these questions to engage in an informative and impactful discussion.

- Recap the three areas of growth discussed last week regarding Gospel-centered relationships.
- Which of these seems most challenging to you? Why?

Read Acts 20:32-35

- Paul wanted this church to live and serve with grace, not guilt. He also wanted them to know that the grace needed for life is found in God's Word (verse 32). He wanted believers to be sanctified and to share this process of becoming more like Christ with others closest to them. What is sanctification? How does God fulfill the promise of sanctification in our lives? (See John 17:17, Romans 6:1-123, Galatians 2:20, 5:22-24, Ephesians 5:25-27)
- If you look back over the many journeys of Paul, you will see that he received grace *from* God and that the grace *of* God abounded through him. Read 2 Corinthians 9:8 and 12:9. When have you experienced God's grace at a point of need in your life? Discuss a specific instance when God's grace has abounded through you.



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- Acts 20:35 states what could have possibly been Paul's life verse, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." How is generosity an outward demonstration of the work of sanctification in a person's life?
- Paul gave three examples in his life and ministry that showed a movement toward generosity in his own life. Discuss these examples. What can you change in your life so that others learn these lessons from you?
 - A movement away from covetousness (Acts 20:33)
 - A movement away from idleness (Acts 20:34)
 - A movement away from selfishness (Acts 20:35)
- Pastor McKinley mentioned 10 Reasons it is better to give from his Old Testament professor, David Murray. Discuss some of these examples and how they show the work of God's grace and generosity in the life of a believer.
 - Giving reflects obedience. (1 Corinthians 16:2)
 - Giving reflects the Lordship of Christ. (Matthew 6:33)
 - Giving exhibits God's heart. (James 1:17)
 - Giving illustrates salvation. (2 Corinthians 2:9)
 - Giving trusts God's promises. (2 Corinthians 9:6,10)
 - Giving pleases God. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
 - Giving advances God's Kingdom. (1 Timothy 6:18-19)
 - Giving promotes God's work of sanctification. (Ephesians 4:28)
 - Giving testifies to God's power. (2 Corinthians 9:8)
 - Giving praises God's character. (Psalm 116:12)

Read Acts 20:36-38

- Paul mentions one final element of Gospel-centered relationships: supporting one another through tears and transitions. When has someone you loved supported you through a transition or goodbye?
- What was most helpful to you in that process?
- Many tears were cried that day and many are cried in our lives as the result of goodbyes, fear, loss, pain, joy, and sorrow. What does the Bible say about tears? (See Psalm 30:4 56:8, Revelation 7:17, 21:4)
- What is the most significant thing you have learned about Gospel-centered relationships?
- What has this lesson taught you about the character of God?

Do Life Together

These questions are meant to encourage you to apply spiritual truth and live on mission for Jesus. It is your Life Group leader's responsibility to challenge you and hold you accountable to taking steps of growth and faith. Take these questions to heart. Allow the Holy Spirit to prompt you to grow in your role as a disciple and ultimately, a disciple-maker.

What might God be teaching you about generosity and grace this week?
Who does God want you to share the Gospel with this week?



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