

Tyson Ziegler
SESSION 2 | Greet and Encourage

Ephesians 4:29; Romans 14; Romans 16

I. Hospitality Confirms the Gospel

The ways we greet and encourage one another demonstrate the care of the gospel.

II. Greet One Another!

A. Romans 14:1-3

- God has welcomed us!

B. Matthew 5:46-48

- Jesus desires that we should greet on the street those who are not our brothers, and even our enemies, and thus draw them into the circle of our fellowship, not recognizing the enmity.¹

– One God is the ultimate host!

C. Romans 16

- Paul greets 22 people in 17 verses.
- Paul used this opportunity to acknowledge evidences of grace in people.

D. Other Biblical Examples

- 1 Samuel 25:6
⁶And thus you shall greet him: 'Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.'

¹ Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 496

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- Romans 1:7
7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1 Peter 1:2b
...May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

E. Recognize distinct characteristics about this command:

- A pronouncement more than a question.
- Can include the obligation of hospitality. Gen. 18; 19
- This practice expresses the welcome of God and the care of God!
- *The New Testament infuses the command [to greet one another] with new depth. It is the peace (Gk. eirēnē) of the gospel, given to the disciples on their mission (Matt. 10:12–13; Luke 10:5), by the risen Christ (John 20:19, 21), and extended in apostolic salutation (e.g., Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3). It is a peace offered to all, irrespective of their status (Matt. 5:47; cf. Mark 12:38).*²
- **Greeting ONE ANOTHER** is a Christian habit and part of making fellowship real.³
- Directly competes with our self-centered culture by empowering us to focus on the needs of others.

Eph. 2:19 – “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens... but citizens!”
Heb. 13:2 – “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers...”

Greeting the stranger (whether inside or outside of the church family) is a gospel-distinctive that draws people into the fellowship we have by faith in Christ!

III. Encourage One Another!

A. 1 Thess. 5:11

¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, ***just as you are doing.***

² Allen C. Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 445.

³ Derek Prime, *Opening up 1 Corinthians*, Opening Up Commentary (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2005), 149.

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Words that build...

Building and strengthening those around us by intentionally using words that “reveal the character and the promises and the activity of God...words that identify the active presence of God, and...communicate the evidences of grace that we observe in others.”⁴

- We’re commanded to identify the evidences of gospel grace we see in each other.
- Without this emphasis, we’re prone to self-absorbed thinking
- Gospel-sized encouragement frees us from the trap of sinful, self-centered thinking.

B. Ephesians 4:29

²⁹Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Words that corrupt...

- “God in this passage is wisely forbidding us from any and all speech that is detrimental to others—words that defile someone, words that are divisive or degrading.”⁵
- Parallel Passages
 - Ephesians 5:4
 - Colossians 3:8
- Flattery
 - A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet. Proverbs 29:5
 - A lying tongue hates its victims, and a flattering mouth works ruin. Proverbs 26:28\

When we speak, people should hear about what God is up to!

Words of biblical encouragement expose:

- How we see God working!
- God is with us!

⁴ C.J. Mahaney, Humility, 114.

⁵ Ibid., ???

C. Biblical Examples of Encouragement

- **Genesis. 45:27-28** - ²⁷ But when they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, *the spirit of their father Jacob revived*. ²⁸ And Israel said, “It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”
- Jonathan strengthened his hands in God 1 Sam. 23:15-17
- Judg. 7:13-15 - Gideon in the Midianite camp
- Dt. 3:28 - “...encourage and strengthen him (Joshua)...
- Judges 20:22 - The men of Israel encouraged themselves...
- Acts 11:23 - “When he saw...he exhorted (encouraged)...”

Spurgeon on the unique role we have of encouraging one another: God employs his people to encourage one another...a brother's sympathy is more precious than an angel's embassy. We should be glad that God usually works for man by man. It forms a bond of brotherhood, and being mutually dependent on one another, we are fused more completely into one family. Brethren, labor to help others, and especially strive to *encourage* them. Talk cheerily to the young and anxious enquirer, lovingly try to remove stumbling blocks out of his way. **When you find a spark of grace in the heart, kneel down and blow it into a flame**. Leave the young believer to discover the roughness of the road by degrees, but tell him of the strength which dwells in God, of the sureness of the promise, and of the charms of communion with Christ. Aim to comfort the sorrowful, and to animate the dejected. Speak a word in season to him that is weary, and encourage those who are fearful to go on their way with gladness. God encourages you by his promises; Christ encourages you as he points to the heaven he has won for you, and the Spirit encourages *you* as he works in you to will and to do of his own will and pleasure. Imitate divine wisdom, and encourage others...⁶

⁶ C. H. Spurgeon, Morning and Evening, September 17
