

Faith desires to be with others of faith

When writing Romans, Paul began by reminding his readers of the essentials of faith. He, along with the other apostles, had *“received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his (Jesus) name among all the nations”* (Romans 1:5). Paul’s mission was straight forward.



The very nature of faith which the apostles were commissioned with is expressed through obedience to Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ. Without acknowledging Jesus as Lord over your life, you have nothing more than religious curiosity. *“Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved”* (Romans 10:9). Authentic faith believes in the resurrected, living Saviour, whom you openly surrender to as Master in belief and behaviour.

Faith connections

Now, watch the connection Paul makes here. He had the believers of Rome in his *“prayers, asking that somehow by God’s will [he] may now at last succeed in coming to”* them (Romans 1:10). He not only valued them but realised the importance of visiting them in person. You see, only face to face fellowship with God’s people would enable the full blessings for the body of Christ to be mutually experienced by both parties.

For Paul, being together meant that he *“may impart to [them] some spiritual gift to strengthen”* (Romans 1:11). Herein lies some of the many strengths to be found in the body of Christ; imparting mercies to your fellow believers is prime. Plus, others get to share in the goodness of God which He has implanted in your life also.

However, Paul did not simply want to share a gift for the sake of pleasure alone. No, he wanted his *“spiritual gift to strengthen.”* Gifts are often given simply for the purpose of entertainment or pleasure, which is certainly not wrong. However, in Christ, the believer is enabled to actually pass on gifts which will build up, strengthen for perseverance, and cause spiritual maturing.

Gifts that count

So, what was the *“spiritual gift”* Paul intended to give; which he was so certain would *“strengthen”* them? He explains; *“that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine”* (Romans 1:12). There you have it; expressing, sharing, and explaining your faith in Christ has the power to encourage other believers. Christians thrive on mutually exchanging their core component of belief – which is faith.

All this becomes possible when fellowship takes place within Christ’s body. Each local Church matures as it explores ways of explaining and expressing their faith in Christ. Remember, faith is not only identifiable but definable. It’s not simply a random feeling which carries you away into a spiritual ‘Lala-land.’ No, as your faith has been gifted to you by God (Eph 2:8), so you are able to communicate it to others.

Obviously, this takes effort. Beginning with time in God’s Word, you prepare yourself by growing your understanding of faith. Scripture also gives you the language required for communicating the nature of faith to others. Your relationship with God through His Son Jesus Christ is able to be viewed and heard by others in ways which will fuel their ability to live

faith in Christ also.

However, isolation from other believers robs all believers of this enormous privilege and responsibility. On the other hand, discipleship enables such relationships to exist and grow for the glory of Christ.

I encourage you; ensure your faith desires to be with others of faith. Share these truths with another believer today who would benefit from a clearer understanding of your friendship in Christ.

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