SERMON OUTLINE Colossians 4:7-14

Partnership in Ministry

PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTRY THROUGH GOING (7-9)

Care About the Larger Church (7a, 9b)

Encourage the Larger Church (7b-8)

1. *Encouraging them by reporting the gospel's progress*

2. *Encouraging them by being a model of faith*

3. *Encouraging them by sending others to them*

4. *Encouraging them by being encouraging in his words*

Serve the Larger Church (8a)

Urge the Larger Church Toward Holiness (9)

PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTRY THROUGH STAYING (10-14)

We Greet (10-11, 12a)

We Pray (12)

We Work (13)

We Comfort (10-11)

Grace Evangelical Free Church

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MAIN POINT

When life is hard, partner with others in ministry by sending them the people who are most helpful to you or stay and focus on being a blessing to them. The main takeaway is to prayerfully forge significant partnerships with other Christians and churches for the sake of the gospel.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were your thoughts on the text/sermon? What most stood out? How was it helpful? Confusing?
2. Of all Paul's instructions on how to navigate hardship, what has been the most encouraging, challenging, and convicting?
3. What is usually your first impulse when your life is hard? Have you ever responded in service? If so, what happened?
4. Are you a meaningful part of any significant ministry partnerships? If not, why not? If so, what does it look like?
5. How would you describe your level of care for the larger church? Are there other churches that you are truly concerned for?
6. Have you ever been encouraged by someone from a far? Which of Paul's four ways will you use to encourage another church?
7. Are you willing to go (even if for a short time) to serve the larger church? Why/not?
8. How has someone from another church helped you grow in holiness? How have you helped someone grow?
9. Paul celebrates the greeting, praying, and working of those who were with him for those who were not. How can you do so?
10. Have you ever struggled in prayer or worked hard for the sake of another church?
11. Have you found any relationship between your level of joy in the Lord, personal hardship, and partnership in ministry?
12. In what way/s did the sermon help you see the greatness of God?

AREAS OF APPLICATION

13. Commit to consistently replying to the newsletters of one of our missionaries and to praying specifically for another church.
14. Pick one of Paul's four means of encouraging the larger church and do it in the coming weeks.
15. Find a way to serve the larger church on a consistent basis or share with someone how you already are.
16. Pray for the strengthening and holiness of a different church each week this month.
17. Decide on a way for your DG to greet, pray, and/or work as a means of strengthening the larger church.
18. Consider carefully how we might be a better ministry partner to the larger church. Share your ideas at DG.
19. Focus on growing in your love for God in specific ways for the sake of the larger church.
20. Take a look at the Treasuring Christ Together Network and share any feedback you have with your elder.
21. Pick one specific thing you mean to do differently, with the Spirit's help, as a result of the things you heard in this text/sermon.

PRAYER POINTS

22. Adoration. Praise God that He is the Lord of every tribe, tongue, and nation, and that everything in heaven and on earth belongs to Him. Praise God for being perfectly loving, faithful, and kind. Praise God for being sovereign, wise, and good.
23. Confession. Confess your indifference to the larger church and your self-focus when things are hard. Confess your lack of love, faithfulness, and servant-heartedness when things are hard. Confess your unwillingness to go as a blessing to the larger church. Confess your failure to greet, struggle in prayer, or work hard for the larger church. Confess coldness to Jesus.
24. Thanksgiving. Thank God that the larger church cared enough to bring you the gospel, write books and host conferences to strengthen you. Thank God for those who pray for you from afar. Thank God for the fact that all kindness is from Him.
25. Supplication. Ask God to strengthen the larger church through you. Ask God to turn your eyes up and out rather than in, when your life is hard. Ask God to give us meaningful partnerships in ministry. Ask God to heal a hurting church.