

COURAGEOUS FRIENDSHIP

Session #4: The Blessing of Gospel Friendship

Opening Question

Where have you experienced the blessing of friendship this past week or month? Has our time in Sunday School and sitting under the Word in church equipped you to see friendship in a new light? How are you putting what we're learning together into practice?

Sermon Content Recap

Big Idea: We receive the blessing of friendship so we can share it.

- 1) Having Friends: Receiving the Blessing of Jesus (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)
- 2) Being Friends: Sharing the Blessing of Jesus (John 20:21-22)

Key Takeaways

- Friendship is essential to human flourishing - From philosophers to musicians to everyday people, everyone recognizes we need friends
- Christian friendship is rooted in God's relational nature - We need friendship because we're made in the image of a relational God
- Friendship provides four key blessings:
 - Doubles our joys
 - Halves our sorrows
 - Shares our hardships
 - Keeps us in God's will
- Christian friendship has an eternal time horizon - We care about each other's Christlikeness, not just acceptance
- We're called to befriend others as Jesus befriended us - "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (John 20:21)

Major Themes Discussion

Large Group Discussion

What does Jesus' way of doing ministry teach us about how we should understand John 20:21-22? What role does the Holy Spirit plan?

Break-out Groups

1. The sermon walked through Jesus' friendship in the Gospel of John, describing it as inviting, fun, available, generous, hospitable, patient, kind, personal, accommodating, selfless, transformative, redemptive, healing, and restorative. Which of these characteristics do you find easiest to express? Which is most challenging?
2. The sermon mentioned that "real friends help us resist sin" and care about our Christlikeness. Do you have friendships where you can have honest conversations about spiritual growth and sin? If not, what holds you back?

Large Group

Who in your life (neighbors, coworkers, classmates) might God be calling you to befriend with "gospel intentionality"? What would it look like to take one step toward them this week?

Application

1. Corporate (What does this mean for **us** as *City Church*?) In our *disposition*? In our communal *practices*?
2. Personal (What does this mean for **me** as a *Christian*?) In my *disposition* toward neighbors, coworkers, classmates, etc.? In my daily *practices* of honesty and hospitality?

Next Week: Friendship Skills–Invitation

