

September 20, 2026

Series: “Romans: The Gospel according to Paul”

Sermon: “Faithful to and Fruitful for Christ and His Kingdom”

Scripture: Romans 1:8-16



Introduction

A. Just as God called Paul to be an apostle, so He has called us as believers to live on mission.

B. What’s a church to do? Why does Crawford Baptist Church exist?

C. Our mission statement: We exist to glorify God by making disciples through the gospel, in community, on mission.

D. If we’re going to be faithful to and fruitful for Christ and His kingdom, we will thank God for the impact of the gospel, strengthen and mutually encourage other believers, and proclaim the gospel to the whole world.

E. Big Idea: The gospel transforms and shapes who we are and what we do.

I. We Will Thank God for the Impact of the Gospel (1:8)

A. “First” simply means that at the beginning of the letter, Paul wanted to thank God for all that He was doing through the gospel in their lives.

B. Paul was thanking God for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was also thanking God because their faith was being talked about throughout the world.

C. People throughout the Roman Empire were talking about it. “Do you know that there are believers in Rome? Have you heard how strong their faith is? Have you heard how they are faithfully serving Christ in that wicked city?”

D. The Christians in Rome had a genuine faith. It was a true, saving, sanctifying faith.

E. A lot of what people call faith today is not biblical faith. Faith doesn’t come from deep-down subjective feelings or positive thinking.

F. Genuine faith is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8-9) and “comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17).

G. Their faith was genuine because it was faith in Jesus Christ and in the gospel. “This is a faith that God himself brought into being and not something that welled up unaided in the heart of mere human beings” (James Montgomery Boice).

H. The Christians in Rome had a contagious faith. “For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith” (Romans 1:17). That is from the faith of one who has believed in Christ to another who comes to believe in Christ as a result of the first Christian’s testimony and proclaiming of the gospel.

I. The Christians in Rome had an encouraging faith. Their faith encouraged other believers, even Paul himself. (1 Corinthians 2:3; 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, 15)

J. The Christians in Rome had an essential faith. “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who draws near to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

K. Let’s thank God for the impact of the gospel in the lives of people around the world.

II. We Will Strengthen and Mutually Encourage Other Believers (1:9-13)

A. Paul served God with all of his heart (“in his spirit”). He was faithful and loyal to God.

B. We also need to serve God with all of our heart. Paul never got over the fact that God saved him by His grace.

C. Too many of us who profess faith in Christ live as if we have gotten over it.

D. “The worst form of blasphemy is a lukewarm Christian. A lukewarm Christian says ‘God, I believe in you, but you just don’t excite me’” (G. Campbell Morgan).

E. Paul served with a gospel-centered focus (“in the gospel of His Son”). The gospel declares what God has done in Christ to save sinners. The gospel is focused on Jesus Christ.

F. Paul was all about Jesus. It’s good every so often to stop and ask yourself what you’re all about. Is what you’re living for worth Christ dying for?

G. Paul wholeheartedly served God by proclaiming the Lord Jesus Christ and Him crucified, buried, and raised back to life.

H. He served the Roman Christians by unceasingly praying for them. He prayed that God would allow him to come to them so that he could see them so that he might impart a spiritual gift to them in order to strengthen them in the faith. He also wanted to see the lost in Rome saved.

I. Paul's prayer was not answered right away. When he wrote the letter to the church in Rome, he was still a long way from Rome.

J. What can we make of this unanswered prayer? "Unanswered prayer may be God's way of teaching that we are not as necessary to the work we are praying for as we think we are" (James Montgomery Boice).

K. Unanswered prayer may indicate that God has other work for us to do at that moment.

L. Sometimes prayers can be unanswered because of spiritual warfare of which we aren't aware. (Daniel 10:1-14)

M. As we fellowship together in the things of Christ, may we impart the spiritual blessing of joy and encouragement to one another. We are to encourage one another through our prayers and insights from the Scriptures.

III. We Will Proclaim the Gospel to the Whole World (1:14-17)

A. Paul wrote three "I am" statements in these verses. (1:14, 15, 16)

B. "I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish."

C. Paul was "under obligation." Paul had an obligation to God to fulfill His divine mandate to be His apostle to the Gentiles.

D. "For if I proclaim the gospel, I have nothing to boast, for I am under compulsion. For woe is me if I do not proclaim the gospel. For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me" (1 Corinthians 9:16-17).

E. Paul was divinely called to proclaim the gospel to people who spoke Greek and had adopted Greek culture ("the wise") as well as the people who were unfamiliar with the Greek language and culture ("the foolish").

F. "In this way, for my part, I am eager to proclaim the gospel to you also who are in Rome."

G. Paul was “eager” or zealous to proclaim the gospel to the people in Rome. He had been given a burning passion to preach the good news of Christ to them.

H. The gospel knows no bounds. The gospel Paul preached, and the gospel we are to preach, crosses all cultural, ethnic, and economic lines.

I. It must be preached to all people, in all places, regardless of who they are or where they are. That’s Paul’s point.

Conclusion

A. Is what you’re living for worth Christ dying for?

B. How is the gospel transforming and shaping who you are and what you do?

C. Are you thankful for the impact the gospel is making?

D. How are you strengthening and mutually encouraging other believers?

E. Is God calling you to go and proclaim the gospel to the nations, to plant a church, or pastor a church?

F. With whom do you need to share the gospel this week?

G. The Gospel Definition