

Romans 1:8-12

⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being proclaimed all over the world.

⁹ God, whom I serve with my spirit in preaching the gospel of His Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you ¹⁰ in my prayers at all times, asking that now at last by God's will I may succeed in coming to you.

¹¹ For I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, ¹² that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.

Berean Study Bible

⁸ First,

I do indeed thank my God, through Jesus Christ, for all of you,
because your faith is being proclaimed in all the world.

⁹ My witness is God, whom I serve in my spirit, in the Gospel of His Son,
how unceasingly I remember you;

¹⁰ always upholding you on my prayers.
pleading if perhaps now, at last, by God's will,
I may succeed in coming to you.

¹¹ Because I am longing to see you
in order that I may impart some gift to you
to spiritually strengthen you.

¹² So, both you and I will be mutually encouraged
through one another's faith.

My own literal translation

1

I've got something to give. Romans 1:8-12

I give gratitude. 8

I am grateful for Jesus. "I thank my God through Jesus Christ"
I am grateful for you. "for all of you, because..."

I give prayer. 9-10

The Gospel points me in the right destination. 9 "I serve... Gospel"
Prayer points me to the right direction. 10 "in my prayers... I may succeed"

I give fellowship. 11-12

I want to establish you. 11 "to strengthen you"
I want to encourage you. 12 "mutually encouraged"

2

With a little help from my friends. Romans 1:8-12

Title of a Lennon-McCartney song for the Beatles, 1967, recorded by Joe Cocker, 1968.

Your faith helps me. 1:8

Your faith is pleasurable to me. 8 "I thank my God... for all of you"

Your faith is promoted in the world. 8 "proclaimed all over the world"

My faith helps you. 1:9-10

My faith helps me speak to others. 9 "preaching the Gospel"

My faith helps me speak to God. 10 "in my prayers"

Our faith helps each other. 1:11-12

Our faith gives us strength. 11 "to strengthen you"

Our faith gives us encouragement. 12 "mutually encouraged"

3

You've made me so very happy. Romans 1:8-12

This is a song by Brenda Holloway, 1967; popularised by Blood, Sweat, and Tears, 1969.

You make me thankful. 1:8

I am thankful for your faith. 8 "because your faith"

I am thankful for your faithfulness. 8 "proclaimed all over the world"

You make me prayerful. 1:9-10

You encourage me to speak with boldness. 9 "preaching the Gospel"

You encourage me to pray more boldly. 10 "prayers at all times, asking...:"

You make me faithful 1:11-12

We are developing mutual strength. 11 "gift to strengthen you"

We are developing mutual courage. 12 "encouraged by each other"

A

Something sensible to say. Romans 1:8-10

What you say. 8

Grateful for a worthwhile friend. "I thank my God... for all of you"

Grateful for a witnessing friend. "your faith is being proclaimed"

What I say. 9

How I serve, is in the Gospel. "I serve God with my spirit in preaching the Gospel"

What I say, is in my prayers. "I constantly remember you ¹⁰ in my prayers"

What God says. 10

God's will requires action. "now at last by God's will I may succeed"

God's will results in connection. "by God's will I may succeed in coming to you"

B

Building healthy relationships. Romans 1:8-13

The first 'not good' recorded in the Bible. 'It is not good for humans to be alone.' (Genesis 2:18)
Relationships require time and energy. I am to love everyone, but I can't have a relationship with everyone. Only God can do that, and I'm not God. But I can choose to have a relationship with some people. Here are several clues towards building healthy human relationships.
No one, on their death bed, says 'I wish I spent more time at the office'.

I can help relationships begin. 1:8-10

Interpersonal keys for healthy relationships 1:8

Look for good / Look generously 'thank'

Look for heart / Look spiritually 'faith'

Look for actions / Look objectively 'reported'

grumpy, hurt, need hope
'what f'ship light-dark'
what others say

Inner personal keys for healthy relationships 1:9-10

My priorities 'serve God' 9a

My prayers 'I pray for you' 9b-10a

My program 'come to you' 10b

'spirit, soul, body'
tell people what you pray
time

I can help relationships bloom. 1:11-13

Healthy relationships require giving

'give spiritual gift' 11a

'make strong' 11b

Healthy relationships require giving and receiving

'mutually encouraged' 12

Self-disclosure 'I want you to know' 13a

Healthy relationships require receiving

Transparent agenda 'in order that...' 13b

C

Plan to succeed. Romans 1:8-17

Plan prayerfully. 8-9

Plan in God's will. 10

Plan for mutual benefit. 11-13

Plan with humility. 14-15

Plan with the Gospel in mind. 16-17

D

Not ashamed. Romans 1:8-17

I am not ashamed of witnessing. 8
I am not ashamed of prayer. 9-10
I am not ashamed of encouragement. 11-12
I am not ashamed of my thoughts. 13-14
I am not ashamed of preaching. 15
I am not ashamed of the Gospel. 16-17

Shame is the fear of how others might respond, but:

God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power, love, and self-control. 2 Timothy 1:7

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery that returns you to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" Romans 8:15

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid. John 14:27

Quotes and illustrations

your faith is being proclaimed in all the world. 8b

Prophecy, by Jesus, that the Gospel will go to the whole world before 70 AD.

And this Gospel of the Kingdom **will be preached in all the world** as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. Matthew 24:14

Commands, by Jesus, to take the Gospel to the whole world, on the Resurrection evening.

⁴⁶And He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and in His name repentance and forgiveness of sins **will be proclaimed to all nations**, beginning in Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. Luke 24:47

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and **preach the Gospel to every creature.**" Mark 16:15

Command, by Jesus, to take the Gospel to the whole world, at the Ascension

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and **to the ends of the earth.**" Acts 1:8

Fulfilment of the Gospel having been taken to the whole world.

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of **the knowledge of Him in every place.** 2 Corinthians 2:14

the Word of Truth, the Gospel ⁶that has come to you. **All over the world this Gospel is bearing fruit and growing**, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood the grace of God. Colossians 1:5b-6

continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope of the Gospel you heard, which **has been proclaimed to every creature under Heaven**, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. Colossians 1:23b

By common confession, great is the mystery of Godliness:

Christ appeared in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,
was proclaimed among the nations,
was believed in throughout the world,
was taken up in glory. 1 Timothy 3:16

First, I do indeed thank my God, through Jesus Christ, for all of you, because **your faith is being proclaimed in all the world**. Romans 1:8

Quotable quotes about faith

Faith is like radar that sees through the fog - the reality of things at a distance that the human eye cannot see. Corrie Ten Boom

True faith rests upon the character of God and asks no further proof than the moral perfections of the One who cannot lie. A W Tozer

When all is said and done, the life of faith is nothing if not an unending struggle of the spirit with every available weapon against the flesh. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Faith is a living and unshakable confidence. A belief in God so assured that a man would die a thousand deaths for its sake. Martin Luther

True faith manifests itself through our actions. Francis Chan

It is not the strength of your faith but the object of your faith that actually saves you. Timothy Keller

Tell people what you pray:

Hudson Taylor was one of the greatest missionaries in the whole history of the Christian church. He was born in Yorkshire in 1832 and died in China at the beginning of the 20th century. Before going out to China he sought to prepare himself by working as a medical student and district nurse in London, learning about primitive medical care. One of the patients he visited was an old man in his home where he had to dress his stinking gangrenous foot. Hudson Taylor had the strongest desire to share his Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ with this person, but the man was a defiant atheist, and very antagonistic to religion. A Scripture reader who had visited him had been ordered from the room, and he had even spat in the face of a visiting vicar. Let me give you Hudson Taylor's own description of what happened.

“Upon first commencing to attend him I prayed much about it, but for two or three days said nothing to him of a religious nature. By special care in dressing his diseased foot, I was able considerably to lessen his sufferings, and he soon began to show grateful appreciation of my care for him. One day, with a trembling heart, I took advantage of his warm acknowledgments to tell him what was the spring of my action, that I was constrained in all I did by the love of Jesus Christ for me. Then I spoke of his own solemn position and his need of God’s mercy through Christ. It was evidently only by powerfully restraining himself that he kept his lips closed. He turned over in bed with his back to me, and said not a word.” But you understand the crucial dynamics of this relationship. The man was in need; he had to have a home help coming regularly to change the dressing on his gangrenous foot. He was in need of Hudson Taylor, but Hudson Taylor was in debt to him, because he’s received free and full pardon from God.

“I couldn’t get the poor man out of my mind, and very often through each day I pleaded with God, by his Spirit, to save him. After dressing the wound and relieving his pain, I never failed to say a few words to him, which I hoped the Lord would bless. He always turned his back on me, looking annoyed, but never spoke a word in reply.

“After continuing this for some time, my heart sank. It seemed to me that I was not only doing no good, but perhaps really hardening him and increasing his guilt. One day, after dressing his limb and washing my hands, instead of returning to the bedside to speak to him, I went to the door, and stood hesitating for a few moments with the thought in my mind, ‘Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.’ I looked at the man and saw his surprise, as this was the first time since speaking to him that I’d thought of leaving without going up to his bedside to say a few words for my Master.

“I could bear it no longer. Bursting into tears, I crossed the room and said, ‘My friend, whether you will hear or whether you will forbear, I must deliver my soul.’ I went on to speak very earnestly with him, telling him with many tears how much I wished that he would let me pray with him. To my unspeakable joy he didn’t turn away, but he replied, ‘If it will be a relief to you, do so.’ I need scarcely say that I fell on my knees and poured out my whole soul to God on his behalf. I believe that God then and there wrought a change in his soul, and within a few days he had definitely accepted Christ as his Saviour. O, the joy it was to me to see that dear man rejoicing in hope of the glory of God! He had not entered a church for forty years...

Today there are between a hundred million and two hundred million Christians in China. A line goes back from so many of those millions over 150 years to a room in London where a man with a gangrenous foot was nursed and borne witness to by a student preparing for the mission field. That seed sown to that man has been effectual for a great harvest.

Geoff Thomas¹

Music and songs

Songs about thanksgiving, 8a

¹ <http://www.alfredplacechurch.org.uk/index.php/sermons/romans/romans-1/114-16-i-am-debtor-i-am-ready-i-am-not-ashamed/>

Give thanks with a grateful heart, SiS 509
It's a good thing to give thanks, Ot 75
My heart is filled with thankfulness, Ot 97
Thank You Lord for giving Yourself to us... Thanksgiving, OT 28
Thank You Lord for my special friends, Ot 56
Thank You Lord for the trials, Ot 53

Songs about faith, 8b

By faith we see the hand of God (Getty)
Could that faith you've been holding... There's gonna be a better day
God is good all the time... And through the eyes of faith (Don Moen)
Humble yourself... By putting your faith and trust in the Lord
I walk by faith, Ot 32
Looking for the city... But with my new eyes of faith (Tunney) Ot 106
My faith has found a resting place, H 669
Oh Lord you lead me... Have faith in God (Bullock), Ot 80
Passin' the faith along to my brother
Therefore, being justified by faith, SiS 29
There's an ember, deep within me... Set my faith on fire
We who shunned the hand that fed us... Now by faith

Songs about the Gospel, 9

A restless generation... It's the Gospel that makes a way (Ryan Stevenson)
By faith... And the power of the Gospel shall prevail (Getty)
I'll always sing this Gospel song (Mat Redman)
Let Your Kingdom come... By Grace we'll preach Your Gospel (Kauflin)
Live for the Kingdom... Bearing the Gospel, go to the nations, Ot 15
Look what God is doing... Take the living Gospel,
Stand up, stand up for Jesus! ...Put on the Gospel armour, H 752
Tell the world... Tell them that the Gospel has come (Gibson, Camp, Bonds) FE 61
We can make a difference... Take the Gospel to the world (Allen)
When the saints go marching out... The Gospel message is, 'Come in'
Where else have we to go when You alone have words of eternal life? (Chiswell)

Songs about prayer, 10

As for me and my house. ...Staying together. Praying together, Ot 84
As I went down in the valley to pray
Before You I kneel / a worker's prayer, Ot 98
Come, my soul, thy suit prepare: Jesus loves to answer prayer (Jn Newton, 1779)
Friends (shooby wop). ...They're lovin', carin' and prayin' for you (Petra)
Heal our land, If My people will humbly pray, Ot 117 (Card)
Hear O Lord and answer. Hear my prayer O Lord, (Psalm 86, Howard)
I found the answer, I learned to pray, CWH 80
I walk by faith. ...And every prayer I make, Is a prayer of faith, Ot 32
I'm praying for you, Ot 33
Let the flame burn brighter. ...And every step, will be a prayer, Ot 44
Make me a channel of blessing, I pray, H 647

Marks of the cross. ...Praying, caring, loving, sharing (Petra)
Have a little talk with Jesus (Cleavant)
Hear my cry, Oh Lord, (Psalm 61, Maranatha)
Oh happy day ...He taught me how to watch, fight and pray, Ot 103
Potter's hand. ...Lead me Lord, I pray, 857
Prayer. This is my prayer, lifted to You (Petra)
Standing in the need of prayer, FE 18
That's how you change the world. It's the prayer in an empty room, (Newsboys)
What a friend we have in Jesus ...to the Lord in prayer, H 421/C 279
When I lift up my head. ...But I found the secret. When I kneel to pray
When we pray. When the church starts praying (Hulse)
Whisper a prayer in the morning, CWH 85
With a prayer... Love incarnate, Ot 38
You must pray every day

Songs about mutuality, 11-12

Thought starters for personal reflection or group discussion.

1. What place does thanksgiving have, v8, and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Why is saying 'thanks' so important?
 2. For what is Paul thankful, v8; and why is that a reason for thanksgiving?
 3. List some simple steps I can take that would let far more people know of my faith, v8b.
 4. Read v10. Does God's will seem narrow and defined, or broad and flexible? Explain why your answer makes you either comfortable or uncomfortable.
 5. A gift may come in many different forms, v11. Why is gift-giving such a valuable ministry? What gifts may be appropriate, or inappropriate, within a church setting?
 6. Look at v12. How do you think mutual faith produces mutual encouragement?
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