

SUNDAY - August 2, 2026

UNASHAMED - Romans 1:8-15 - Love God Love People

SERMON SUMMARY:

Romans 1 presents the Christian life as a wholehearted love for God that overflows into love for people. Paul begins with thanksgiving and prayer, reminding believers to intentionally encourage others by recognizing their faith instead of criticizing their faults. In a culture marked by isolation and distraction, these practices build genuine community and strengthen those who are faithfully following Christ, knowing that spiritual fruit often brings spiritual opposition.

Paul also calls believers to live with generous, persistent love that gives more than it takes. Faithful friendships are marked by sacrifice, loyalty, and a refusal to give up on people, while the church's greatest obligation remains proclaiming Jesus above every competing priority. Thanksgiving, prayer, generosity, perseverance, and gospel witness work together to form a community that reflects Christ's love and advances His kingdom.

SCRIPTURE:

Romans 1:8-15, Acts 9:26, Proverbs 18:8, Proverbs 3:4-5, Ephesians 3:20, Proverbs 17:17, Ezekiel 20:30-31, James 5:19-20

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What are the five specific actions Paul takes toward the believers in Rome, as described in this passage?
2. According to the passage, what was the reason Paul had been prevented from visiting Rome so far?
3. What does Paul say he is "obligated" to do and for whom?
4. What reason does Paul give for being so eager to preach the gospel also to the believers in Rome?
5. Why might Paul choose to publicly thank God for the Roman believers' faith, which was being reported all over the world?
6. Paul says he prays for them "constantly." What does this suggest about the nature and frequency of prayer for other believers, especially those who are spiritually strong?
7. In verse 11, Paul says he wants to see them to impart a spiritual gift to make them strong, but then adds that he also wants to be encouraged by their faith. How do these two ideas work together in Christian friendship?
8. How does Paul's sense of being "obligated" to all kinds of people shape his view of his mission and relationships?
9. When was the last time you specifically and verbally thanked a friend for a character quality or action you admire in them? Who is one person you could encourage this week by naming a virtue you see in them?
10. Think of someone in your life whose faith seems strong and is making a public impact. What would it look like to pray for their protection and perseverance regularly, knowing that spiritual fruit often attracts opposition?
11. Is there a relationship in your life where you tend to focus more on what you can get from the person rather than what you can give? What is one practical way you could shift your posture to contribution this month?
12. Consider a friendship that has grown distant or difficult. What is one small, persistent step you could take to reconnect or support them, demonstrating loyalty that refuses to give up?
13. What is one "secondary war" or distraction in our culture that tends to consume your attention or conversations? How could you reorient that energy toward proclaiming Jesus to those who don't know Him?
14. Look at your current patterns of communication. When you hear someone criticized, what is a simple phrase you can use to redirect the conversation toward thankfulness for that person?
15. Who is one person in your life that others might have given up on? How can you demonstrate persistent, Christ-like friendship to them in the coming season?