

## RIPPLES OF RELATIONSHIPS

1 Peter 5:12–14 | 4/26/26 | Dave Geldart | Tru Community Church

**ANNOUNCEMENTS: Welcome. Connect. Giving. Tru Family SERVE NIGHT - Wed 630p.**

### 1. [1] INTRO

- a. There's something striking about how Peter ends this letter.
- b. After everything he's written about—
  - i. suffering, holiness, identity in Christ, submission, witness, spiritual warfare—
  - ii. you might expect a final theological crescendo. One more doctrinal push.
    1. One more command.
  - iii. But like we noted last week, instead, he ends with:
    1. [2] Ripples of Relationships
    2. People. Names. Affection.
    3. A glimpse into a network of friendships that carried the Gospel across the world.
- c. [3] 1 PETER 5:12-14 "12 With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. 13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. 14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ."

### 2. A LETTER HELD TOGETHER BY PEOPLE

- a. Peter mentions a few names:
  - i. Names of people we're about to get quite familiar with as we study Acts next as a church!
  - ii. People like Silas—"a faithful brother," Peter calls him.
  - iii. He references "she who is in Babylon," that's the church in Rome.
- b. And then Peter says something quite personal:
  - i. "my son Mark greets you."
- c. That's not just a greeting. That's a story.
- d. But before we get to Mark, stay a moment with Silas.
  - i. Silas is not a background character.
  - ii. After the apostle Paul and his ministry partner Barnabas parted ways—
    1. we'll get to why in a minute—

- iii. Paul chose Silas as his partner for his second missionary journey. Planting churches and making disciples
- iv. Together they carried the Gospel into Europe for the first time.
  - 1. They were beaten for their faith in Philippi,
  - 2. thrown into prison, and at midnight they sang hymns.
- v. That's not mere duty. That's friendship forged in shared suffering.
- e. Peter calls him "a faithful brother."
  - i. Different apostle, same man.
- f. Now. Mark.
  - i. That "Mark" is John Mark.
  - ii. And his story is one of failure, fracture, restoration and redemption.
  - iii. As we'll see soon in Acts, John Mark starts strong.
    - 1. He joins Paul and Barnabas on their epic first missionary journey
      - a. around 48 AD.
    - 2. But partway through—no clear explanation given—he leaves them.
    - 3. He goes home.
    - 4. He abandons them and the mission.
  - iv. A year or two later, when Paul and Barnabas prepare for a second journey,
    - 1. Barnabas wants to bring Mark again.
    - 2. But Paul refuses. Hard no! He's not faithful. We can't rely on him.
  - v. The disagreement becomes so sharp that the two leaders part ways!
    - 1. That's not a small conflict.
    - 2. That's a fracture between two pillars of the early church.
  - vi. But pause there.**
  - vii. And look at the man who stepped in for John Mark when Paul walked away: Barnabas.
    - 1. The man whose name literally means "son of encouragement."
    - 2. He choose this young man who had failed,
      - a. and he refused to give up on him.
      - b. He invested.
      - c. He shepherded.
      - d. He stayed.
  - viii. About a decade later, Paul writes from prison: "Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is useful to me for ministry."
    - 1. Useful. Asking for him specifically! I want him. Restored relationship!

- ix. And here, with Peter, written soon after Paul’s prison letters, Mark is not just “useful”—he’s *family*. “My son.”
- x. This young man who failed,
  - 1. who caused fracture,
  - 2. who abandoned, disappeared—
- xi. was pursued, disciplined, restored, and brought back into the center of Gospel mission.
- xii. He went on to write the Gospel of Mark in your Bible.
  - 1. And this isn't a quick reconciliation story.
  - 2. It's a 15-year arc of epic failure, public disgrace, faithful investment by Barnabas, patient restoration, and eventual fruitfulness.
  - 3. The man who wrote one of the four Gospels nearly disappeared from ministry entirely. It took people who refused to let him go.
  - 4. That's the weight behind "my son."
    - a. Peter isn't just signing off warmly —
    - b. he's naming the outcome of years of people believing in John Mark when John Mark had given people every reason not to.
    - c. What a deeply encouraging thing that is!
- xiii. It didn’t happen in isolation.
  - 1. It happened in relationship.
- g. This is what the early church looked like:
  - i. not just preaching and planting,
  - ii. but bands of brothers and sisters bound together in relationships strong enough to withstand failure.
  - iii. People who walked together through thick and thin,
  - iv. long enough to rescue one another from spiritual death—
  - v. and who had the scars to prove it.
    - 1. This is how God works. Then, and now.

### 3. THE KIND OF RELATIONSHIPS THAT FORM US

- a. Think about what Mark’s story required.
- b. Barnabas willing to absorb the fracture with Paul in order to not give up on someone worth fighting for.
- c. Paul willing, eventually, to say: bring him back.
- d. Peter willing to take a young man under his wing as a spiritual son
- e. Silas willing to go wherever the mission required

- f. This is how God forms us.
  - i. Not primarily in isolation with our Bible and our journal—
    - 1. though that matters—
    - ii. [4] but God forms us through one another.
      - 1. Through encouragement and correction.
      - 2. Through conflict and forgiveness.
      - 3. Through shared mission and shared suffering.
      - 4. Through friendships that endure.
- g. You don't become holy alone.
  - i. You don't persevere alone.
  - ii. You don't experience resurrection life alone.
- h. **God forms us *through* one another.**

#### 4. A CULTURE STARVED FOR THIS

- a. And this matters critically right now for us.
- b. [5] We are living in a moment marked by profound disconnection.
- c. People are more networked than ever,
  - i. digitally connected with hundreds and thousands,
  - ii. and yet more isolated than ever.
- d. Loneliness, anxiety, depression, addiction—are epidemic.
- e. And into that kind of world, OUR CULTURAL MOMENT
  - i. [6] the church has something distinct to offer—
  - ii. not as a program, but as a people.
- f. A different way of being human together.
  - i. Not shallow connection.
  - ii. Not transactional contacts.
  - iii. [7] But deep, committed, loving relationships
- g. The kind of relationships where you are known—and still loved.
- h. That kind of life is both a calling *and* a gift.
  - i. It's inconvenient.
    - i. It's costly.
- j. And it's exactly what we were made for.

#### 5. [9] REFLECTING ON WHERE WE'VE BEEN

- a. As we close this series, it's worth remembering where we've walked together in 1 Peter, looking at

- i. *Rippling Hope in a Watching World.*
- b. We started in 1 Peter 1—
  - i. **our identity as God’s chosen exiles,**
    - 1. with a living hope rooted in resurrection.
  - ii. We explored what **holiness looks like when you’re a stranger** in a culture that doesn’t share your values.
  - iii. We learned what it means to be “strangers who stay” and **engage our neighbors**
  - iv. We sat with the challenge of a **hope that answers questions**
  - v. We pressed into **suffering** and found that God doesn’t waste any of it.
  - vi. Last week we stood firm with Peter at the end of his letter—
    - 1. **Mutual humility**, resisting the enemy, trusting the God of all grace.
  - vii. And now, here—we’re reminded that the whole journey is meant to be walked **together.**
- c. All along, we’ve used this image of a ripple.
  - i. Our small acts of obedience—unseen, often costly—becoming, in God’s hands, something that spreads far beyond us.
  - ii. That’s been our word this year: *RIPPLE*.
  - iii. It connects to the big things we’re asking God to do among us—
    - 1. the BHAGGs we’ve placed before Him—
      - a. to grow in discipleship, small group living, and planting a new church
      - b. not through spectacle,
      - c. but through steady, faithful obedience lived out in community.
    - 2. None of those God-sized goals happen without this kind of relational foundation.
  - iv. And here’s what Peter shows us at the end:
    - 1. **One of the most powerful stones you can drop into the water is this— give yourself to deep, Christ-centered relationships.**

## 6. THE RIPPLE OF RELATIONAL OBEDIENCE

- a. Because when you do, two things happen at once:
  - b. [9] First, it *shapes you.*
    - i. Relationships become a means of grace FOR YOU.
      - 1. You grow in patience, because people are sometimes difficult.
      - 2. You grow in humility, because you’re not always right.
      - 3. You grow in forgiveness, because you will be wronged.
      - 4. You grow in love, because you choose to stay.

ii. This is how God forms Christ in us.

**c. [10] But second—it becomes *fruit*.**

i. You begin to experience something deeply good.

1. Joy.
2. Belonging.
3. Stability.
4. Shared life.
5. People to laugh with, cry with,
  - a. learn with,
  - b. fight with,
  - c. and walk with over the long haul.
6. In fact, many of the people we invest in, pray for, bear burdens for, forgive, help move, bring meals to, comfort through tragedy—
  - a. many of these become the fruit of our ministry that God blesses us with.
  - b. Unlooked-for friendships on the Way that endure to the end.

**d. [11] John Ortberg puts it like this:**

i. *“No matter how little money we have, no matter what rung we occupy on anybody’s corporate ladder of success, in the end what everybody discovers is that what matters is other people. Human beings who give themselves to relational greatness—who have friends they laugh with, cry with, learn with, fight with, dance with, live and love and grow old and die with—these are the human beings who lead magnificent lives.”*

1. —John Ortberg, *Everybody’s Normal Till You Get to Know Them*

ii. I’ve shared this quote before. But it’s so good - not because it’s sentimental.

1. But because it’s deeply biblical.
2. And it’s what I want for every person in this room.

**e. I can say this personally:**

- i. some of the greatest unlooked-for gifts in my life have been friendships formed on the Way.
- ii. I’ve tried to live that Ortberg quote.
- iii. And what I can tell you is: it is worth it.
  1. Every inconvenient, costly, beautiful step.

**f. And I’ve seen it here at Tru**

- i. When I first came as your pastor,
  1. the seeds of this life together were already present.

- ii. But in less than three years, **I've watched it grow noticeably.**
  - 1. And I believe God wants more of that for us
- iii. **That we would become a church known for relational greatness.**
  - 1. Known in our area not impressive programs—but compelling love.
  - 2. Where people walk in and sense: *something is different here.*
    - a. They don't just attend—they are known.
    - b. They don't just sit—they belong.
- g. In a world trained toward cynical indifference, we move toward people:
  - i. Neighbors. Coworkers. Family. Teammates.
- h. We offer not just words on Sunday, but relationship on Monday**
  - i. We get close enough that it costs us something.
  - ii. Just like Jesus did.
- i. And Jesus said, in the first passage I preached from when I came to Tru:
  - i. [12] John 13:34-35 - <sup>34</sup> "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
- j. When others see how we love one another, when they experience how we reach out and love them
  - i. they'll be drawn to Christ!
  - ii. BY LOOKING AT OUR RELATIONSHIPS
- k. In a cultural moment of chronic disconnection and anxious isolation—
  - i. this is why we major on relational evangelism.
  - ii. This is why we will keep pouring our energies into doing life together
    - 1. in small groups where this kind of body-life can actually play out.
    - 2. And in personal discipling relationships like these.
- l. These small acts of obedience,
  - i. God can ripple out far beyond what we could ask or imagine.
  - ii. Beginning with our neighbors
- m. **Who knows what God might do as we give ourselves to relational greatness?**

## 7. THE INVITATION

- a. So here's the invitation as we close 1 Peter:
  - i. [13] **Don't settle for shallow Christianity.**
    - 1. Don't settle for attendance without connection.
  - ii. **Take the step.**
    - 1. Into a lifestyle of discipleship

2. Join the group.
3. Initiate the conversation.
4. Invite someone out for a drink and into your life.
5. Stay when it's hard.
6. Forgive when it's costly.

**iii. Drop the stone.**

1. And trust that God will ripple it outward—
  - a. into your own formation,
  - b. into the lives of others,
  - c. into a watching world that is hungry for something real.

**8. [14] TESTIMONY TIME**

- a. We're going to shift now.
- b. For the last part of our time, we want to hear from you.
- c. As you think back over this series—eight weeks walking through 1 Peter together—
- d. we want to make some space to honor God and encourage one another about what He's done.
  - i. *What's something God has done in you—or through you—during this series?*
  - ii. *What's something that's sticking with you?*
  - iii. *What's a step of obedience you sense God asking you to take?*
- e. Take a moment to pray and think.
  - i. *God what do you want me to share?*
- f. And as you're ready, raise your hand and we'll bring you a mic
  - i. Keep your stories short please so others can share

**9. [15] COMMUNION (Start by 11:05)**

- a. As we come to the table, we remember this:
- b. **All of this**—every relationship, every act of love, every step of obedience—
  - i. **flows from what Christ has done for us.**
- c. He didn't keep His distance.
  - i. He moved toward us. He gave His body. He shed His blood.
  - ii. So that we wouldn't just be forgiven—
  - iii. but brought into a family.
- d. And as we take communion, we don't just remember Him and his sacrifice
  - i. **We remember and celebrate that we belong—**
  - ii. **to Him, and to one another.**



# Rippling HOPE

*in a Watching World*

A Journey Through 1 Peter

# RIPPLES OF RELATIONSHIPS

1 Peter 5:12-14



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Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

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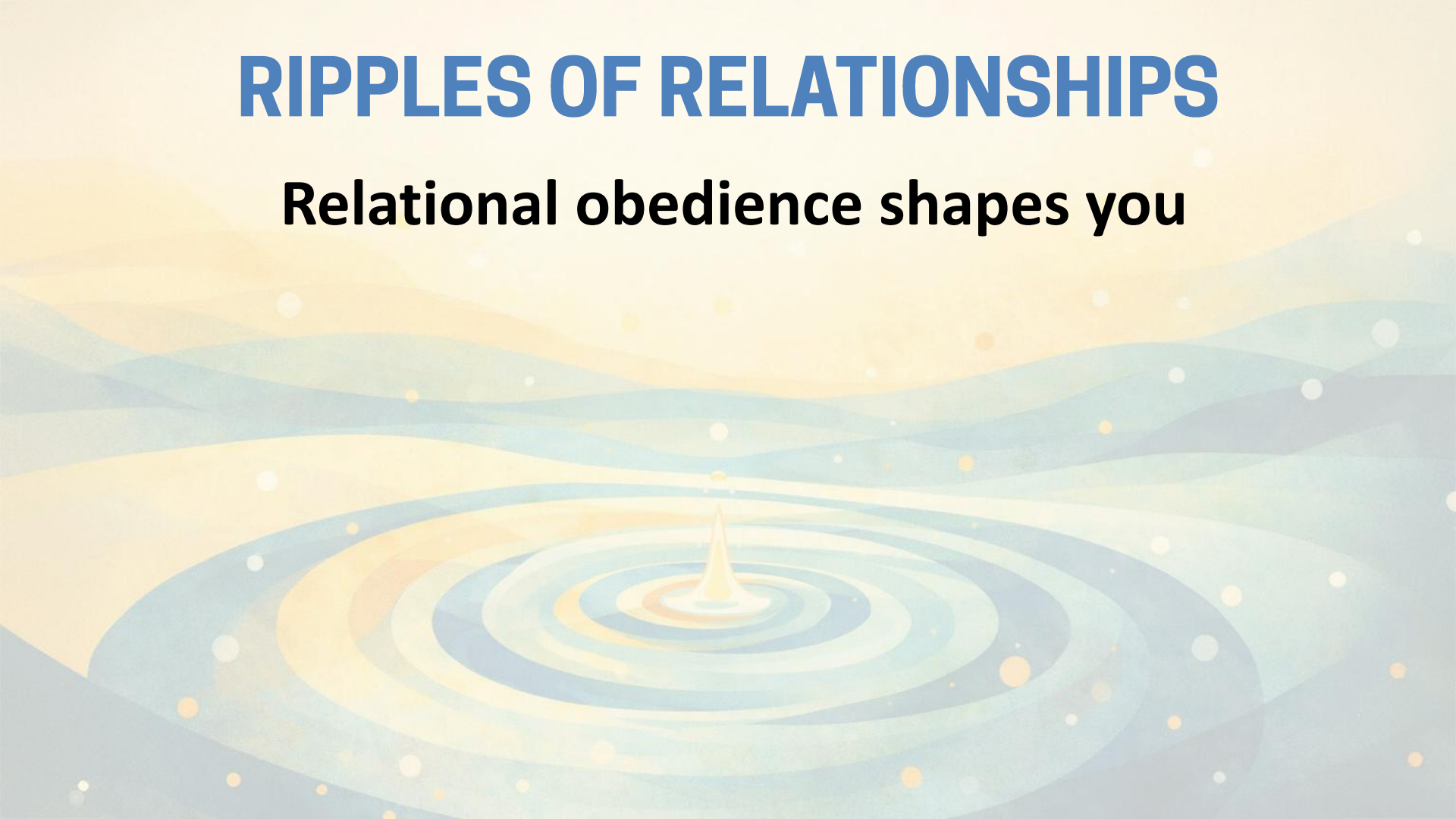
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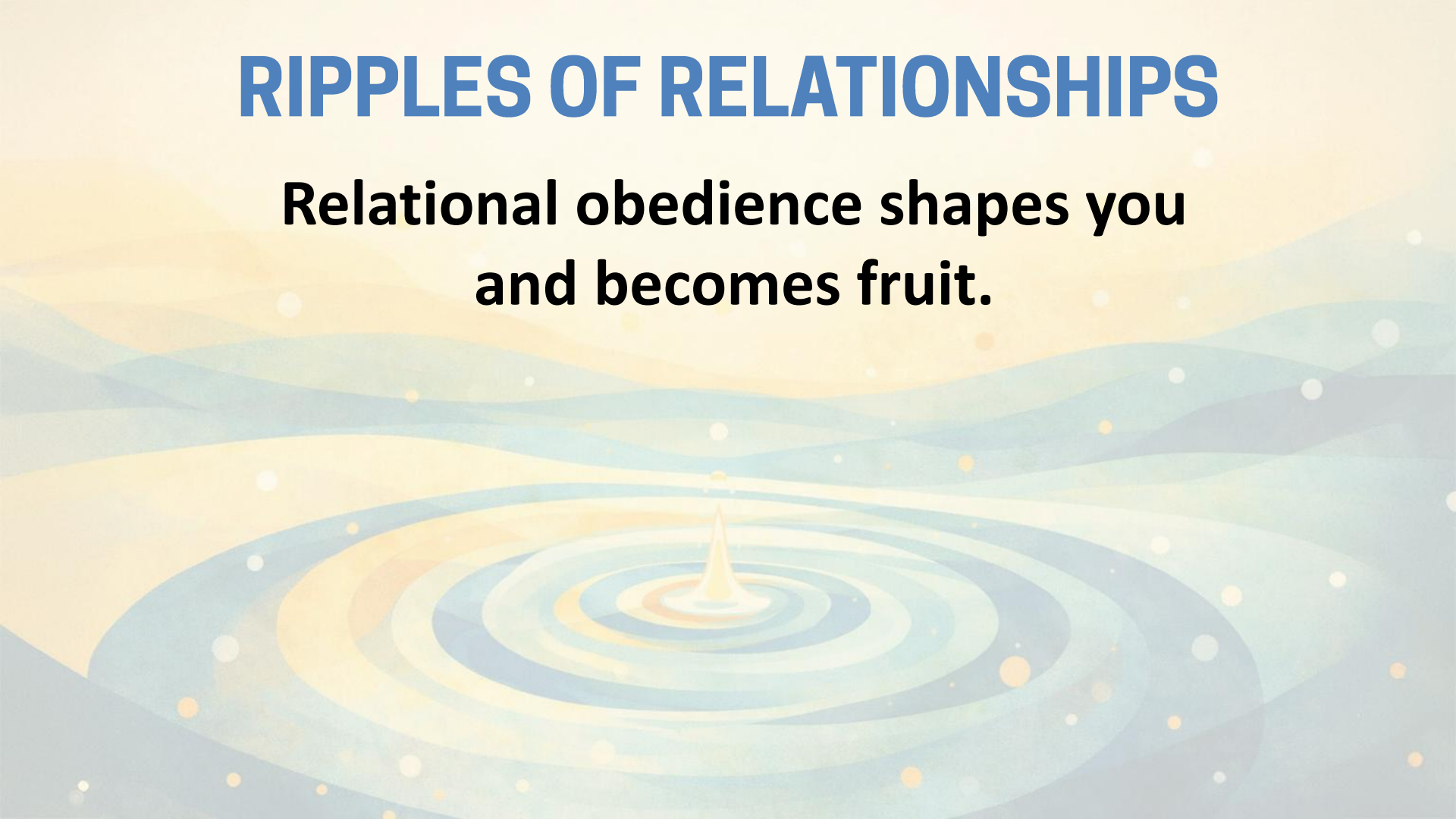
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**Relational obedience shapes you**



# **RIPPLES OF RELATIONSHIPS**

**Relational obedience shapes you  
and becomes fruit.**



# RIPPLES OF RELATIONSHIPS

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# THE INVITATION

**Don't settle for shallow Christianity**  
or attendance without connection.

**Take the step:**  
join, initiate, invite, stay, forgive.

**Drop the stone**  
and trust God to ripple it outward.

# TESTIMONIES

What has God done in or through you during this series?

What's something that's sticking with you?

What's a step of obedience God is asking you to take?

- 
- 1. A Hope that Ripples Out*
  - 2. Holy Lives in Ordinary Places*
  - 3. Cornerstones & Stumbling Blocks*
  - 4. Living as Strangers Who Stay*
  - 5. A Hope Worth Asking About*
  - 6. When Faith Costs You*
  - 7. Ripples Begin with Shepherds*
  - 8. Ripples of Relationship*

# COMMUNION

