

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“Being An Encouragement to Others”

By Brian Meade

Everyone needs a little bit of encouragement from time to time, especially when we have difficulties come our way. When we have a bad day at work, at school, or at life in general — we need someone to remind us that, “*it can only get better!*” And, “*Tomorrow’s a better day!*” That kind of encouragement can help us to keep going, when we are struggling to put one foot in front of the other.

Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words has three words that are used in the scriptures that help us to know how to encourage.

(1) *protrepo*, “*To urge forward, persuade.*”

(2) *paramutheomai*, from *para*, “*with*” and *muthos*, “*counsel or advice.*”

It means to, “*encourage*” in *I Thessalonians 5:14*, there signifying to stimulate to the discharge of ordinary duties of life. In *John 11:19, 31*, it means to “*comfort.*”

(3) *paraklesis*, “*A calling to one’s aid.*” (*para*, “*by the side*” and *kaleo*, “*to call*”). It also means “*to beseech, or exhort, encourage, comfort.*” Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon: “*That which affords comfort or refreshment.*”

With those words and definitions in mind, I want to look at several ways we can be an encouragement to other people, and especially our brethren in the Lord (Galatians 6:10).

(1) By Helping Others in a Time of Need.

When the early church had just began (Acts 2) and so many Jews had stayed far away from their homes after gathering at Jerusalem for Pentecost— they had some who had needs and they relied on the generosity of the brethren (Acts 4:32-35). We read of one such generous brother in Acts 4:36-37, “*Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet.*”

Joseph is not usually the name we remember, but rather it is the one that the apostles changed it to: Barnabas—“*Son of Encouragement*”— that one we remember. I am certain his generosity comforted the brethren so much to know that others would sell their own property and sacrifice for their benefit. We can be like Barnabas and help with pressing needs that others have today, thus being a “*Son of Encouragement*” to them!

(2) By Being There For Those Who Need Encouragement.

We can encourage those going through difficult days and seasons of life by being there for them. We need to let them know that we care and most importantly, God does too!

This requires that we visit with them in some way, just as the first part of Greek definition of *paramutheomai*, “*para*” means “*with.*” As we often know, we cannot comfort those we have no contact with or visit in some way. It may be a phone call, an email, a greeting card, a personal visit to their home, or a visit to the hospital when they are sick. These things we do to encourage and help by letting them know they are not alone! Some of the darkest days we can ever have, are when we are suffering and no one cares for our soul (Psalm 142:4).

Sadly, being alone in suffering makes more vulnerable to Satan’s attacks and we need to remember Ecclesiastes 4:12 in this light, “*And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.*” Our encouragement may be just what others may need to stay strong in times of suffering. Sometimes a little encouragement can go a long way!



(3) By Encouraging & Admonishing Others to be Faithful to God.

Again in Acts 11:21-23, we read, “*And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord. The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch. Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord.*”

When there were new converts to the Lord at Antioch, we read that it was Barnabas— “*the Son of Encouragement*”— who was sent to encourage and urge the brethren to commit their hearts and lives to the Lord.

There are times today when someone may need a word of encouragement to urge them forward and persuade them not to give up or “*throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.*” (Hebrews 10:35) They may think they can’t go on anymore (I have heard Christians talk like this), and it is then we need to encourage them with the words of Paul in Philippians 4:13, “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*”

The words of admonitions and the promises of God can provide our comfort and solace. Paul wanted the brethren at Thessalonica to not be anxious about those who had died before the Lord’s return and, *not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.*” (I Thessalonians 4:13) And Paul gave them the necessary words from God that brought them to a better understanding of the resurrection in I Thessalonians 4:14-17. Paul then concludes with the fitting words, “*Therefore comfort one another with these words.*” (I Thessalonians 4:18)

What should be the most encouraging thoughts we could ever have— is to leave this earth behind with all of its problems and strifes, and go home to be with the Lord for all eternity! (John 14:1-3; I Peter 1:3-9)

**GOSPEL
MEETING**

**Kevin Kay
April 22nd–27th
7:00 PM Nightly**

“Almost Persuaded”

By Jim Walsh

“Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.” (Acts 26:28)

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are blessed to wear His name. Let us consider one of the passages where that name is revealed.

- (1) First, this passage is dealing with the Apostle Paul, and his defense as given before King Agrippa (Acts 26:2-29). During his speech, Paul preached Jesus Christ, and Him crucified (verses 9 through 20).
- (2) Secondly, Paul was sure to preach the evidence which would convict. Paul did not mention anything about his being *innocent*, but spoke the truth: that he was an Apostle, sent by Jesus Christ, to preach to both Jews and Gentiles (verses 17-20).
- (3) It was then this message, and the forcefulness of the facts, which caused Agrippa to make his famous statement: “Then Agrippa said to Paul, “*You almost persuade me to become a Christian.*” Paul’s goal then, was not to defend himself, but Christ! In this hour of trial, when his life was on the line, Paul spoke about Jesus Christ as the Savior for all mankind! Paul produced the evidence of Moses and the prophets (verses 22,23), as well as the life of Jesus Himself, Whom Agrippa was familiar with (verse 26). It was then to those facts that King Agrippa responded in such a way. These are the same facts that Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost. The same facts which Phillip preached when he went into Samaria. The same facts which Paul wrote about to the Corinthians (I Corinthians 15:1-4). And, it is these same facts which will save souls today. To be a Christian, is to belong to the family of God and the body of Christ. What about you? Are you a Christian?

News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Betty Hurst, Steve Switcher, Gail Armstrong, Nicky Curtis, Janis Johnson, Elmo Wilson, Martha Little, Martha Norvell (in Ripley Rehab), Charlene Newborn (had a fall and has flu in the Landmark Nursing home for rehab), Robbie and Delain Doles, Barbara Holloway (has flu) Penny Carmichael, and Jack Nanny (wife passed away).

Local Meetings:

Our Gospel Meeting is coming up **April 22-27**, with Kevin Kay from East Columbus. 7:00 PM Nightly.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Chris Callahan
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon: *"Myths About Church Discipline"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service: Paul Johnson
The Book of Luke (Mike Willis)
Page 69, Question #21

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Tony Whittemore
Psalm 100
Chris Callahan
Jerry Kennemur
Song Leader: Russell Briggs & Adam Harris
Lord's Table: Men of the congregation lead singing
Assisting: Fred Johnson
Song Service: Brian Meade
Invitation:
Closing Prayer:

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

February 28th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Busby
1 & 2 Samuel (Mike Willis)
Page 32, Question #20
Invitation: Dan Cottrell
Song Leader: Adam Harris
Closing Prayer: Paul Johnson