

May 6, 2020

## Mid-Week Message

Last Sunday I touched upon the concept of encouragement. Today I wish to explore this topic a wee bit deeper.

I will start this message from John 16-33, “ In this world you will have trouble, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” Jesus said these words because He knows the world we live in and He knew the challenges the apostles would face in spreading the gospel. Things have not really changed very much. There are going to be times as His followers, we will need the comfort that encouragement gives. As Christians we can maintain our peace and joy through Jesus who has overcome the world by His saving work. St. Paul encourages the Roman Christians with these words, “ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” Romans 8-37.

So what makes Christian or Biblical encouragement different? Christian encouragement is different than complementing someone’s haircut or what they are wearing. These are important too. Christian encouragement is different in that it is said or done with the hope that it will inspire someone’s heart to the Lord. Christian encouragement should make the encouragee aware of God’s presence and grace in their lives. So that they become more aware of how God is working in their lives. Christian encouragement should also remind the encouragee that in the midst of their life trials , God is still there to comfort and support them. Encouragement is an essential way to extend God’s grace to each other. We can do it with words or actions.

A great example of this in the early church was Barnabas. In Acts he was given the name, son of encouragement. His first name was Joseph and he was a Levite from Cyprus. Barnabas was the kind of person you wanted around when

preaching the gospel. He was well known for his charity and sharing and he was a driving force in the developing church of Antioch. He was much more than a cheerleader. Barnabas was a man of great conviction. The early church had a culture of encouragement as its foundation. In many places it still does. You can see it and feel it in some churches today. The people still carry on the practice of Christian encouragement. When this happens we are giving grace with our words and actions . It then becomes a living , breathing grace that encourages. So pray that we continue to encourage one another. God Bless, Pastor D