**Jesus Our Encourager**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Romans 15:4-6**

**Sunday Morning**

**November 17, 2024**

**Romans 15:4-6**

4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. 5 Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, 6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Saints, discouragement comes to all of us at times, but we don’t have to remain in that condition.

Although it often feels like a trap from which there is no escape, every believer has a choice to either stay in a pit of discouragement or to get out.

It all depends upon our perspective. If we focus on our difficult circumstances and negative feelings, we can easily be drawn into despair and depression.

But when we fix our eyes on our great, encouraging God, He lifts us up and sets us free.

Saints, the Scripture we just read says that God gives both perseverance and encouragement so that we can have hope.

Perseverance is the determination to keep going and not give up, whereas encouragement inspires, motivates and energizes.

When we let the Lord encourage us, we’ll have the energy, desire, and strength to endure whatever hardship we’re facing.

**Encouragement**

To encourage means to call to one’s side; to help, console, or strengthen; or to instill courage in another person.

The original Greek word is also translated as comfort.

Saints, Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church and stated that no matter what challenges we encounter, God is there to comfort and give us the fortitude to endure.

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4**

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

But we’ll miss His blessings if we fail to recognize how much He desires to help us.

**What Attributes of God make Him our Great Encourager?**

A key element in overcoming discouragement is having a personal understanding of who God is and how He operates.

Once we identify His attributes and recognize that they are manifested to us through His indwelling Spirit, we’ll have a reason to be hopeful even in trying situations.

**Merciful**

The Lord knows our circumstances and feels compassion for our pain and struggles.

Therefore, He bends toward us to give great comfort!

**2 Corinthians 1:3**

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort...

**Omnipresent**

We are never out of God’s reach because He is everywhere.

Even in times of loneliness and rejection, we are not alone since His Spirit lives within us.

**Psalm 139:7-10**

7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.

**Omnipotent**

Our Lord has all power and governs everything.

We never have to wonder whether He is able to handle our situation. He’s more than enough for whatever we’re facing.

**Colossians 1:16-17**

16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

**Omniscient**

Saints, since God possesses all knowledge, He has the answers to all our problems and is able to give perfect guidance for every decision.

**Psalm 147:5**

"Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite." (Meaning Beyond Measure)

**Gracious**

Saints, the Lord’s grace toward us doesn’t mean we’ve done something to deserve it.

He knows we cannot be perfect, but He has promised to forgive and cleanse us when we confess our sins.

Even when we continue in disobedience, He graciously disciplines and corrects us so we won’t continue on a path that could ruin our lives.

**1 John 1:9-10**

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

**Patient**

Saints, God is willing to wait even when we procrastinate in obeying Him.

His goal is to bring us along in our spiritual growth, not to cut us off when we fail.

**2 Peter 3:9**

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

**Wise**

Saints, the Lord’s judgments are unsearchable, and His ways are unfathomable.

He knows what’s best for us at each point in our lives and can guide us wisely in every situation.

**Romans 11:33-35**

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! 34 "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" 35 "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?"

**Faithful**

Saints, even if we are faithless, He remains faithful because that is His nature. What He promises, He will do.

**2 Timothy 2:13**

"If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself"

**1 Corinthians 1:9**

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord

**Good**

Saints, the Lord is not only the giver of good things; He’s also the one who determines what is good.

When we understand that He allows trials, heartaches, and difficulties because they are beneficial for us, we won’t become discouraged by them.

In time, we may even look back and thank Him for them.

**Psalm 107:1-2**

1 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. 2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy...

**Unchanging**

Saints, the God of the Old Testament is the same One we worship today.

**Malachi 3:6**

"For I am the LORD, I do not change..."

He is still faithful to us just as He was to Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, and David.

He has never changed but has simply given us deeper insight into His nature and ways through His Son.

When Jesus came to earth as the God-man and interacted with mankind, He revealed the Father in ways we could more easily understand.

**Hebrews 13:8**

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

**How does God encourage us?**

There is no reason to stay in a state of discouragement, because the Lord’s attributes clearly reveal His desire to encourage us.

However, we must also be aware of the ways in which He reaches out to us.

**His Word**

Saints, our first response to any challenge, difficulty, or pain should be to seek out God’s Word.

That’s where we’ll find His promises to guide and help us.

When we believe what He says and trust that He is faithful, we’ll be encouraged and strengthened.

**Proverbs 4:20-22**

20 My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. 21 Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; 22 For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh.

**Prayer**

Saints, the Lord doesn’t want us to be anxious, but instead to come to Him with every concern.

One of the simplest and most effective prayers we can offer to the Lord in our times of need is, “Jesus, help me!”

No problem is bigger than our omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent God who is committed to encouraging us.

**Philippians 4:6-7**

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

**His Plans**

**Jeremiah 29:11**

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Saints, Jeremiah 29:11 says that the Lord’s plan is for our “welfare” and is designed to give us “a future and a hope.”

When the circumstances of life become discouraging, we need to focus on this awesome promise and trust that God is working in our behalf.

**Godly Friendships**

Saints, when Paul closed his letter to the Colossians, he listed the friends who encouraged him as they worked together for the kingdom of God.

We all need genuine relationships like this with people who support and strengthen us spiritually.

**1 Corinthians 15:33**

"Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

**Proverbs 12:26**

"The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray."

**Worship Music**

God often encourages us through favorite hymns or choruses that remind us of His faithfulness.

**Ephesians 5:19**

Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord...

**His Presence**

Saints, an awareness of the Lord’s constant presence with us is so encouraging. No matter where we are or what we’re doing, He’s with us, working everything out for our benefit.

**Psalm 16:11**

"You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore."

**In Closing**

**1. What do you normally do when you feel discouraged?**

**2. Has this response lifted your spirits or left you feeling disheartened?**

**3. Have you ever felt trapped in discouragement?**

**4. How does it make you feel to know that you can choose to step out of the trap?**

**5. Which of God’s attributes would bring you the most hope in the face of disheartening circumstances?**

**6. As you consider the ways the Lord wants to encourage you, which ones do you need to remember and focus upon?**

Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**