**Jesus Our Greatest Encourager**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**1 Thessalonians 5:1-14**

**Sunday Morning**

**August 27, 2023**

**1 Thessalonians 5:1-15**

1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.

5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

12 And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13 and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. 14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.

Saints, we all experience times and situations when we need an encourager—someone who lifts us up if we’re down, motivates us to keep going when we want to give up, and stands with us through every challenging circumstance.

Saints, what’s more, each of us needs to be an encourager to someone else. There are people all around us who are discouraged and could use a word of comfort or an act of kindness.

Whether friends, family members, acquaintances, or strangers, we could make a tremendous difference in someone’s life and give them a glimpse of Christ as we follow His example of compassion and kindness.

Saints, when Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica, he encouraged them with assurances of Christ’s return and information about what to expect.

Paul said,

**1 Thessalonians 5:11**

“Therefore encourage one another and build up one another just as you also are doing”

**The Greek word for an encourager is “parakletos,” which means “one who is called alongside.”**

And that’s exactly what we are to do for one another—come alongside to help.

Saints, the night before His crucifixion, Jesus told the disciples that although He was leaving, He would send them another Helper.

**John 14:16-18**

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

**This is the same Greek word “parakletos.”**

Up until that point, Jesus had walked beside them, but now someone like Him would come and actually live within them—the Holy Spirit, who is part of the Godhead

**Jesus, our primary example of an Encourager**

Saints, Christ’s teachings were filled with words of encouragement on various subjects.

**1. Prayer**

He taught His disciples to expect answers to prayer.

**Matthew 7:7**

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened”.

**2.** **Forgiveness**

Saints, Jesus showed them the importance and benefits of forgiving others.

**Matthew 6:14-15**

14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

**3. Anxiety**

Saints, using the example of God’s provision for flowers and birds as proof of His care for them, He told the people not to be anxious.

**Matthew 6:25-34**

25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 28 So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

**4. Sin**

Saints, when the Pharisees and Sadducees brought Him a woman caught in adultery, He didn’t condemn her but said,

**John 8:10-11**

10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

**5. The Spirit**

Saints, Christ’s most encouraging message was given to His disciples the night before His death. He told them of the persecution they’d soon face but also assured them that He would send His Spirit to be with them forever.

**John 16:5-13**

5 "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' 6 "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more;

11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. 12 I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

Saints, Jesus encouraged people with His actions, providing whatever was needed.

**6. Provision**

Saints, after teaching a large crowd, He felt compassion for them because they were in an isolated place and had nothing to eat.

Taking five loaves and two fish, He multiplied them to feed a crowd of over five thousand people.

**Matthew 14:19-21**

19 Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes.

20 So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. 21 Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

**7. Protection**

Saints, when His disciples were caught in a storm on the sea and in danger of sinking, Jesus came to them walking on the water saying:

**Mark 6:47-51**

47 Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. 48 Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.

49 And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out; 50 for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." 51 Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled.

**8. Healing**

Saints, on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus was not too busy to heal Bartimaeus, a poor, blind beggar who cried out to Him for mercy.

**Mark 10:46-52**

46 Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

48 Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 49 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you." 50 And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.

51 So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight." 52 Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

**9. Life**

Saints, when Mary and Martha were grieving over the death of their brother, Jesus demonstrated His power by raising him to life:

**John 11:38-44**

38 Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."

40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" 41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

42 And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me."

43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

**10. Care**

Saints, even in the midst of His suffering on the cross, Jesus was concerned for His mother and told John to take care of her.

**John 19:26-27**

26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" 27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

**In Closing:**

**How to become an encourager with our speech:**

1. Give a sincere compliment.

2. Speak the truth with love.

3. Pass on helpful information.

4. Encourage with Scripture and pray for them.

5. Correct them when it’s appropriate.

6. Let them know you love them.

7. Comfort and assure them when they need it.

8. Say thank you.

**With our actions:**

1. Offer a smile or give a gift.

2. Don’t interrupt but listen quietly.

3. Hug them. Forgive them. Serve them.

4. Point out their accomplishments and reward them.

5. Be honest and patient.

6. Accept them as they are. n Point them in the right direction.

7. Motivate them to be and do their best.

Saints, 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."

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**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.”**