

“Our Mutual Ministry of Encouragement”

Colossians 1:1-14; 4:7-14

Sunday Evening, February 16, 2020

Introduction: You may not think of yourself as an encourager, but the Bible says that is what you are to be if you are a Christian. Encouragement is the mutual ministry that God has given to every believer. We see it in Hebrews 3:13 and 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

There are different ways to encourage other believers. In Paul’s letter to the believers in Colosse, we see some ways you can encourage other believers.

1. You can encourage other believers by being with them and doing what you can do to help them.

- You see this in Colossians 1:1
- You see this in Colossians 4:7-14

Illustration:

1. Timothy was with Paul in Rome while Paul was a prisoner. Paul was a prisoner in Rome when he wrote Colossians, but he had living quarters (Acts 28:16-31).
 2. At the end of the letter you see others who were with Paul doing what they could do (4:7-14).
- Tychicus: He delivered Paul’s letter to the Colossians, the Ephesians (6:21), and Philemon (v.9).
 - Aristarchus: Accompanied Paul on his trip to Jerusalem and Rome.
 - Mark: One of Paul’s key helpers.
 - Justus: A Roman Jew who had believed Paul’s message.

- Luke: Paul's personal physician who travelled frequently with Paul in his missionary journeys.
- Nymphas: The church in Laodicea met in his (her) house.

Application: Your presence and help when other believers are in their "prison times" is encouragement to them.

Illustration: I have learned that when I feel like I need encouragement that if I will encourage other people somehow, I am encouraged.

2. You can encourage other believers by your actions and your prayers.

- Paul's letter was an action of encouragement to the Colossian believers.
- Paul's prayer was encouragement to the Colossian believers (1:9-14).

Illustration: Your actions will be using the abilities and resources God has given you to encourage other believers.

Application: Use your phone to encourage someone. Use your internet to send an encouraging email to someone. Use your cell phone to send a text of encouragement. Write a letter to encouragement. Open the door at the store for an older person.

3. You can encourage other believers by your Christian example.

- This is how the believers in Colosse encouraged Paul (1:9).
- The example of their faith in Christ Jesus encouraged Paul. (1:4).
- The example of their love for other believers encouraged Paul (1:4).

Illustration: I was encouraged this weekend by the example of Chris Allen who led the music for Breaking Free. (To hear this story listen to the sermon on the church web page www.fbp.org).

Conclusion: The Bible tells us that one day David was distressed because the people were talking about stoning him. David was discouraged. The Bible goes on to say, "But David found strength (encouragement) in the LORD his God" (1 Samuel 30:6).