**GODS WORD THE ONLY SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT**

**SCRIPTURE READING…1 Sam. 30:66And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.**

BELOVED, today I pray the word of God will bring forth through this message words of encouragement to all who are in a distressed situation!!!

Today please allow me ask a few personal questions, because in order to get to the bottom of the situation we need to bring out it in the open to show that many of us need encouragement. I as God’s servant am looking forward to diffuse some issues that have from time to time plagued and discouraged and distressed me!!

So today, If you hear something that fits your situation just keep it to yourself and hear what God has to say concerning your situation. If you don’t hear your situation mentioned, praise God and listen, Amen??

Do you have a job that is far from pleasant? Have you lost your job or about to lose your job? Are you having bad financial problems? If so, has your financial situation cause you to lose your home or about to lose your home? Are you grieving over the death of a loved one which has given you that empty, lonely feeling? Do you have a son or daughter that needs help in many areas of their lives? Are you hurt because a close love affair you were in has broken apart? Are you suffering from a debilitating disease of some sort? Are you suffering from the aches, pains, and loneliness of old age? Have you been sorely disappointed in someone you trusted? Are you disappointed with yourself suffering under the burden of guilt? Is your marriage far from what it ought to be? Are you going through the pains of a divorce? Have you been through the pains of a divorce? Have you been through the pain of your parents getting a divorce? Has one or more of your children greatly disappointed you? Have your parents greatly disappointed you? Are you discouraged by the way you have been treated by some brother or sister? Have you ever been bullied by someone and are too scared to open your mouth? Are you discouraged because of church problems? Do you have an addiction to drugs, smoking, or alcohol? Are you suffering because a family member or friend has an addiction problem? Are you discouraged because you are not the kind of Christian you ought to be? Do you feel that you are not appreciated by your family, or your brethren? Is immigration a burden to you that keeps you from being free in the Spirit? Is your neighborhood a place full of evil? Are government laws too stressful for you? Has a

These are just a few of the things that can cause someone to act in a manner unbecoming a Christian.

**BELOVED TODAY WE CAN TAKE COURAGE IN KNOWING THAT WE ARE GOD'S LITTLE FLOCK.**

***Luke 12:32 32Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.***

We are of the few who believe and know the truth.

We are a family, a spiritual family, and every single one of us is just as important as the next.

The very least in the kingdom is greater than John the Baptist.

***Matt. 11:11 11Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.***

"The first shall be last and the last first."

***Luke 13:28-30 28There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.29And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.30And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.***

That humble, lowly person will be saved; but the proud will not be.

Who would have thought that a worthless thief would have been saved?

***Luke 23:43 43And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.***

The tie that binds us together in our spiritual relationship is love.

"Let love be without hypocrisy...Be kindly affectionate to one another in brotherly love...Repay no one evil for evil."

The kind of love that Paul is emphasizing is a genuine concern for each other.

Let's stick together, and continue to encourage one another in love.

***Eph. 4:1-3 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,2With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;3Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.***

United we stand, divided we fall.

You might think, "I'm not loved and appreciated." Well, that’s not true!

But you are. You are in this spiritual family. We do love you. We are brothers and sisters in Christ, of the family of God.

***1 Cor. 12:21-22 –21And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.22Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:***

We hope there will never come a time when any of us will say, "I have no need of you."

**II. WE CAN TAKE COURAGE BECAUSE THERE IS A BETTER WORLD BEYOND.**

***Gal.6:9 9And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.***

"Grow weary" means "to succumb to fatigue."

***John 4:6; 6Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.***

***2 Cor. 11:2727In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.***

"Well doing" means "doing the good works which God ordained."

***Eph. 2:10; 10For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.***

***2 Thess. 3:1313But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.***

"For in due season we shall reap."

It is discouraging to continue to do right and receive no word of thanks or see no tangible results.

But Paul challenged the Galatians and he challenges us to keep on doing good and to trust God for the results.

In due time, we will reap the harvest of blessings.

There is a better place beyond the grave, and we need to keep our eyes focused on it

***1 Pet. 1:1313Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;***

Paul suffered many hardships.

***2 Cor. 11:23-2823Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.24Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.25Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;26In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;27In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.28Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.***

1. Yet, he called them a "light affliction."
2. He could only do this by keeping his mind focused on the eternal glory that was to follow.

 (3) It is far better to depart and be with Christ.

 (4) In heaven, God will wipe away all tears.

**III. WE CAN LEARN FROM THE EXAMPLE OF KING DAVID.**

***1 Sam. 30:66And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.***

Think of the situation David and his men were in.

***1 Sam.30:1-5 And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;2And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.3So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.4Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.5And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.***

How did David strengthen himself in the Lord?

He called on Abiathar the priest and asked for the Ephod! David, new it was not a time to cry or get all impatient or discouraged, it was time to praise God and pray to Him.

Psalm 18:6; 27:1,4-5; 34:1-8; 40:1-3

Pray. Luke 18:1; Phil. 4:6-7; Heb. 13:6; Prov. 18:10

**IV. THE O.T. GIVES STRENGTH, COURAGE, AND COMFORT.**

***Isa. 40:28-31 28Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.29He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.30Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:******31But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.***

All human beings have their weakness, but God's power and strength never diminishes.

He is never too tired or too busy to listen and help. He is the source of our strength.

When you feel all of life crushing you and you cannot go another step, remember, you can call upon God and renew your strength.

Verse 31 –***31But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.***

Waiting on the Lord is patiently relying on Him to give us strength.

Our God is able.

***Ephesians 3:20-21 20Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,21Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.***

The Psalms inspire, comfort, and encourage us just when we need a word from the Lord.

An example, Psalm 23.

The scene in the Psalm is a flock of sheep, gently and harmlessly feeding in fertile pastures, under the care of a skillful, watchful, and tender shepherd, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.

The consolations of the Lord are the still waters by which the saints are led; the streams which flow from the Fountain of living waters.

The valley of the shadow of death implies that the most severe and terrible affliction one could come under. We can say… Yet,"I will fear no evil, for thou art with me."

**V. THE N.T. SCRIPTURES GIVE US COMFORT AND STRENGTH.**

***1 Pet. 5:8-118Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:9Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.10But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.11To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.***

 1. Satan is the source of all evil and suffering.

 2. God is able to "perfect" (mend or repair) us and make us

 strong.

 3. Whatever pain we might have, the Eternal God is the God of all comfort.

 Let us come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain help in our time of

 need.

***Heb. 4:15-16 15For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.16Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.***

***Jude 24 24Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,***

Jude encouraged the believers to remain firm in their faith and trust in God's promises for their future.

This was all the more important because they were living in a time of increased apostasy.

We too are living in the last days, much closer to the end than were the original readers of this letter.

Although there is much iniquity around us, we need not be afraid or give up in despair God is able to keep us from falling, and to bring us into His presence and give us exceeding joy.

***2 Thess. 2:16-1716Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,17Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.***

**Concl.**

 A. Disappointments, discouragements, and hardships will come.

 B. We need to be steadfast and unmovable ourselves.

 C. The Eternal God is perfectly able to comfort.

 D. Someday we shall reap if we don't give up.

 E. Let us continue to strengthen ourselves in the Lord our God.