

ENCOURAGEMENT IN BATTLE

EXODUS 17.12

INTRODUCTION:

1. From presidents to priests, shepherds to saints, everyone is in need of encouragement. A compliment, a reassuring word is valued.
2. Perhaps one of the most overlooked men of the Bible, Hur is considered by some to be the Barnabas of the Old Testament.
3. In a time of weariness and discouragement Christians depend on the support of our brethren.

I. THE ENCOURAGEMENT THAT WE ALL NEED

- A. As it was critical for to succeed, Moses was forced to endure insurmountable pressures. (Ex. 4.13)
 1. The people constantly complained to Moses challenging his leadership. (Ex. 14.11; 15.24; 16.2; 17.1-7)
 2. The problems continued to mount as Amalek came to make war with Israel. (Ex. 17.8; Deut. 25.17-19)
 3. Being Joshua's first battle, there was pressure to succeed to establish Joshua as a leader. (Ex. 17.9; Josh. 1.1,2)
 4. In the battle against the Amalekites, victory and defeat was in the hand of Moses. (Ex. 17.10,11)
- B. Like Moses we all face times of discouragement.
 1. Often discouragement comes in waves. (Job 1.13-19)
 2. The sinful conduct of those around us. (2 Pet. 2.7,8)
 3. By our efforts we may be responsible for someone being saved or lost. (2 Cor. 2.16; 1 Tim. 4.16; Heb. 13.17)

II. THE ENCOURAGEMENT WE ALL RECEIVE

- A. Because of his weariness, Moses received the support of Aaron and Hur. (Ex. 17.12,13)
 1. Without their support the battle would have been lost.
 2. They did not stand by, nor compete, but worked together.
- B. Since we all grow discouraged, we need to be supportive.
 1. Brethren offer encouragement. (Ecc. 4.9,12; Heb. 3.13)
 2. Brethren work together. (1 Cor. 12.25-27; Gal. 6.2)
 3. Brethren need reminding. (Ex. 17.14-17; Eph. 5.11)
- C. Moses used the rod as a tool for success. (Ex. 17.9)
 1. The rod was a powerful tool. (Ex. 4.1-5; 14.16; 17.5)
 2. Today we have the word of God. (Phil. 4.13; Heb. 4.12)

CONCLUSION: Christians are to be encouragers of one another.

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MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS :	9:00AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP:	9:50AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP:	6:00PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS	7:30PM

*Worshipping
God "in Spirit
and truth"
(John 4.23)*

JULY 12TH, 2009

GOD GIVES THE INCREASE

Sermons have been preached, books have been published, and articles have been written to teach members of the body of Christ how to cause growth in the church. Congregations which seem to be stagnant, or worse, declining, panic wondering what they can do. However, we cannot forget that church growth is largely due to the fact that God gives the increase.

There is no doubt that Christians have a grave responsibility to the growth of the church. Paul writes that growth is achieved when every member is working (Eph. 4.16). Since the church is made up of individuals, it only makes sense that church growth cannot happen unless there is individual growth. Therefore we must be diligent to add to our faith (2 Pet. 1.5-8).

Indeed, Paul planted and Apollos watered (1 Cor. 3.6). Yet the progress that was made could not be credited to these alone as the Corinthian brethren tried to do (1 Cor. 1.11-13). The work was performed by Paul and Apollos, but it was God who caused the results (1 Cor. 3.7). The work that we do without the help of God results in Christians spinning their wheels. Furthermore, taking credit for the growth that God produced is tantamount to blasphemy (Acts 12.21-23).

Growing as a congregation is a tremendous task, and men are often baffled as to how to proceed. However, if we do what God has always expected us to do, (ie. Encourage brethren, reach out to the lost, be faithful in service), and leave the results to God, then growth of the body occur. Growth is the natural result of working and letting God do the rest.

CLP

THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS

JOHN 11.35

INTRODUCTION:

1. The relationship that Mary, Martha, and Lazarus shared with Jesus was close-knit. (Luke 10.38-42; John 11.1-5)
2. In one of the few instances where Jesus showed emotion, it is comforting to see His humanity. (Heb. 4.15; 5.2)
3. In this moving account we read of four important points worthy of our careful consideration.

I. JESUS WAITED ON LAZARUS

- A. Hearing the news of Lazarus, Jesus did not immediately rush to his aid, but stayed for two more days. (John 11.6)
 1. Did He lack the power to save him? (Matt. 4.24)
 2. Was it a lack of courage? (John 11.7,8,16)
 3. Yet His delay resulted in Lazarus' death. (John 11.11-14)
- B. **JOHN 11.4:** "...but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." (cf. v.15,21,22,41,42)

II. JESUS WEPT FOR LAZARUS

- A. Having arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days indicating that all hope was lost. (John 11.17)
 1. Yet Martha had hope. (John 11.18-24; 1 Thes. 4.13-18)
 2. Martha need not wait till the last day, for the resurrection and the life was standing before her. (John 11.25-27)
- B. Approaching the tomb, Jesus showed His humanity in a visible display of sorrow. (John 11.28-36; Rom. 12.15)

III. JESUS WONDERED OVER LAZARUS

- A. In a powerful display of the glory of God, Jesus called Lazarus forth from the grave. (John 11.37-44)
 1. Could Jesus really raise the dead? (John 11.37,21)
 2. Thus is what Jesus came to do. (John 10.10; Eph. 2.1)
 3. In wonderment, many believed in Jesus. (John 11.45)
- B. Sadly many Jews did not believe. (John 11.46-53)
 1. Sometimes Jesus wondered at man's determination not to believe in Him despite the evidence. (Mark 6.6)
 2. It is a wonder how one can witness the dead raised and still not believe. (John 12.9-11; Luke 16.27-31)

CONCLUSION: We are confident of better things concerning you.

OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN

There is great city pride to the citizens of Las Vegas, just as there is great pride of citizens of any city. This pride is seen in the desire for the home team to win. There is a sense of belonging that comes from being a part of the community. There is interest in the welfare of the city, the city's economy, and the elected officials who govern our city. And if anyone asks, one is proud to retort that they are a Las Vegan.

This same city pride was also felt by those who lived in the city of Philippi. As a city in ruins, Philip II of Macedonia (father of Alexander the Great), restored the city and named it after himself in the third century B.C. Later, under Augustus Caesar, the city of Philippi became a Roman military village in which the Romans could control the surrounding region. Therefore, being a military installation the citizens had the unique privilege of being exempt from taxes which further fueled their pride.

It was to these Philippian citizens that Paul wrote, "*For our citizenship is in heaven*" (Phil. 2.20). These Christians who understood the value of citizenship were now being reminded that they were residents of a city which enjoyed even greater benefits. One day they would live in the great spiritual city which is heaven.

As nice as it is to live in a place that has such benefits, it is not eternal. The Hebrew writer expressed this thought when he said, "*For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come*" (Heb. 13.14). Additionally, every city contains worldly elements that draw us to temptation, but in Las Vegas the problem is so blatant that our home is dubbed "Sin City". Yet in heaven we are promised that "*there shall by no means enter into it anything that defiles*" (Rev. 21.27). Furthermore, in this earthly city, people come and go. Some move away to a different city, others pass away. But in the heavenly city there is no death and no dying (Rev. 21.4). There will be no more departing loved ones, for we shall be joined with the faithful in heaven and "*thus we shall always be with the Lord*" (1 Thes. 4.17).

Indeed, our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly wait for it knowing that no earthly city shall offer the same benefits and privileges that heaven offers.

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