

The Power Of Encouragement

Colossians 2:1-7

Introduction

I The Challenge Of Paul's Ministry

- A. Paul _____ for the believers at Colosse - Col 4:12-13
- B. Paul struggled for the believers at Laodicea
- C. Paul struggled for those who had not met him personally
 - 1. That they might be _____ in heart - 2 Cor 1:3-7
 - 2. That they might be _____ in love - Eph 4:16

II The Purpose Of Paul's Ministry

- A. That they might have _____ - 1 Jn 5:20; 1 Cor 2:12
- B. That they might know the mystery of God:
 - 1. Namely, _____, in whom are hidden: - Col 1:27
 - a. All the treasures of _____ - Job 28:12-13, 21-23
 - b. All the treasures of _____ - Eph 1:17; Hos 6:3
- C. That no one would _____ the Colossians: - Gen 29:25
 - 1. By fine-sounding arguments - Acts 20:29-31; James 1:22

III The Encouragement Of Paul's Ministry

- A. He was absent in body but present in spirit - 1 Cor 5:3
- B. He delighted to see how _____ they were - 1 Cor 14:40
- C. He delighted in how _____ their faith was - 1 Cor 16:13;15:58

IV The Exhortation Of Paul's Ministry

- A. He exhorted them to continue in _____ - Rom 1:17; 10:17
- B. He exhorted them to continue to live in Christ - Col 1:10
 - 1. _____ in Him - Eph 3:17-19
 - 2. Built up in Him - Acts 20:32; Jude 1:20
 - 3. _____ in the faith - 2 Cor 1:21; 1 Cor 1:8
 - 4. Overflowing with _____ - 1 Thess 5:16-18

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Take some time this week to consider the following:

1. Who has provided you with the greatest encouragement in life?
2. What do you think motivated Paul to struggle (agonize) in prayer in behalf of people he had never even met? What does this teach you about true spiritual leadership? [Read Col 4:12]
3. How does Paul's purpose of exhorting the Colossian believers to be "encouraged in heart and united in love" (v. 2) facilitate their capacity for a greater comprehension of Jesus Christ?
4. What were some of the "fine sounding arguments" that you fell for before you came to Christ? What prompted you to reject these arguments? Are there any that are still hindering you in your walk with the Lord?
5. According to Paul, the church should be a place of disciplined order and strength, like a well-trained troop. Read Eph 4:16. How are you contributing to the orderliness and strength of CCK?
6. The phrases, "rooted", "built up" and "strengthened" are all in the passive form, meaning that they are characteristics that God develops in us. What role, if any, do you have in facilitating the growth of these characteristics in your life?
7. Read 1 Thess 5:16-18. One of the marks of spiritual maturity is a heart of gratitude – regardless of the circumstances. Take a moment now to thank God for "all things" knowing that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."
8. Take time this week to thank the people God has used to inspire you with their words of encouragement. And then ask the Holy Spirit for opportunities this week to inspire others with words of encouragement!

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

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