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The Art of Encouragement

Colossians 4:7-18

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Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

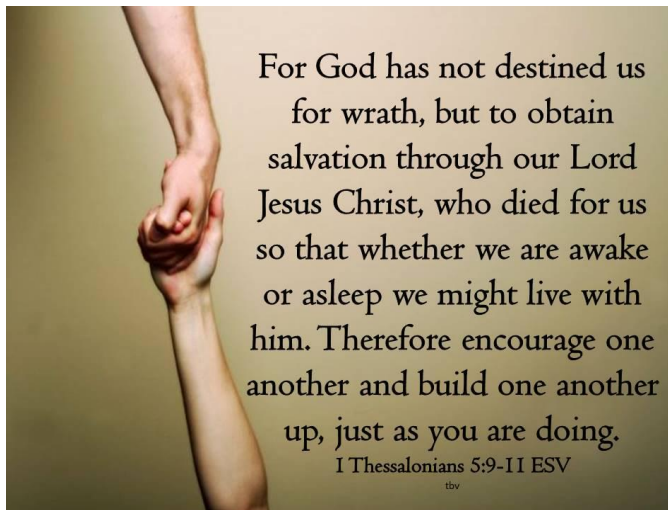
What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



Paul closes his letter with this last section in Chapter 4. It includes a very personal greeting from Paul and the people doing ministry with Him. Paul is on the mission field and is suffering for the advancement of the Gospel yet, he still finds encouragement to pass along to the church in Colossae. We often have many things going on in our lives and we are just trying to keep our heads above water. In this passage Paul shows a great example of how we can be an encouragement to others even when our lives are challenging. Join us this week as we look for how we can be an encouragement to others.



Colossians 4:7-18 (NASB)

⁷As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. ⁸*For* I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts; ⁹and with him Onesimus, *our* faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your *number*. They will inform you about the whole situation here.

¹⁰Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and *also* Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him); ¹¹and *also* Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me. ¹²Epaphras, who is one of your

number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis. ¹⁴Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and *also* Demas. ¹⁵Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house. ¹⁶When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter *that is coming* from Laodicea. ¹⁷Say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."

¹⁸I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.

o EXAMINE His Word (Observation) (For personal preparation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the foregoing passage.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

2 EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation) (For Community Group discussion)
What does God MEAN?

8. Who is delivering the letter?

9. Do you think this passage is an encouragement to the church? Why?

10. Who has a concern for the church and what does he do in response to his concern?

11. Why do you think Paul lists all the people that are with him?

12. Do we know anything about the people Paul mentions in this passage from other parts of Scripture?

13. Where is Paul writing from? How can this be an encouragement?

③ EMBRACE His Word (Application) (For Community Group discussion)
Why does this MATTER to me?

14. When you hear about other ministries what is the most encouraging aspect?

15. How can we be encouraging to other ministries or to our missionaries?

16. Paul is in prison but he does not let that stop him from being an encouragement to the church. What types of things make it hard for you to be encouraging? How can we overcome these things and be an encouragement?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...

Sermon Notes