

Sermon Notes

July 09, 2023

La Jolla Christian Fellowship

Acts: Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey // S3E6 The Power of Encouraging Relationships

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Acts 20:1-6

¹ When the uproar had ended, Paul sent for the disciples and, after **encouraging** them, said good-bye and set out for Macedonia.² He traveled through that area, speaking many words of **encouragement** to the people, and finally arrived in Greece,³ where he stayed three months. Because the Jews made a plot against him just as he was about to sail for Syria, he decided to go back through Macedonia.⁴ He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia.⁵ These men went on ahead and waited for us at Troas.⁶ But we sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined the others at Troas, where we stayed seven days.

**“Our chief want is someone who will inspire us to be what we know we could be.”
— Ralph Waldo Emerson**

After Christ, Paul's greatest asset was the encouraging relationships he surrounded himself with.

1. **Understanding Encouragement**
2. **Investing in Relationships**

1. Understanding Encouragement

Vs. 1 When the uproar had ended, Paul sent for the disciples and, after **encouraging** them, said good-bye and set out for Macedonia.² He traveled through that area, speaking many words of **encouragement** to the people.

- **Aspazomai**— As-paz-zo-mi draw to one's self to embrace
- **Parakaleō**— *to call to one's side, to entreat.*
 - **English**-To urge by strong, often stirring argument, admonition, advice, or appeal.
 - *Few things will cement the bonds of relationship like ENCOURAGEMENT.*
 - *Boosting Confidence, Motivation and Inspiration, Improved Relationships, Emotional Well-being, Personal Growth and Development, Strengthened Resilience, Ripple Effect*

2. Investing in Relationships

Vs. 4 He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia.

- Like north and south, Paul had two guiding poles in his life, Jesus and others.
 - In Paul's 13 NT books, he mentions 88 people in his greetings alone.¹

We tend to overvalue the building of homes, wealth and career while failing to fashion the most crucial and meaningful component of truly living. Relationships.

Practical Takeaways:

1. Pray for and develop the gift of encouragement.
2. Choose a group of people to cultivate relationships with.
3. Partner with those people to do something meaningful and of value.

Questions for small groups:

1. In this passage, Paul seemed to lead all relationships with encouragement. Why do you think that was? What does encouragement offer that is so important?
2. The Greek word, **Parakaleo** is used in verse two and means *to call to one's side, to entreat*. Thus encouragement is seen as partnering. Why is partnering important to those you encourage?
3. Paul was surrounded by like minded and like missioned people. Are you?
4. If you could partner with people in a mission of some kind, who would they be and what would you want to do?
5. What is the difference between having relationships and investing in relationships?

¹ 26 (Romans) + 6 (1 Corinthians) + 5 (2 Corinthians) + 0 (Galatians) + 0 (Ephesians) + 5 (Philippians) + 10 (Colossians) + 4 (1 Thessalonians) + 2 (2 Thessalonians) + 11 (1 Timothy) + 9 (2 Timothy) + 6 (Titus) + 4 (Philemon) = 88