

Encouraging One Another

1. Introduction:
2. We Must Meet Together
3. The Great Encourager:
4. Barnabas' First Example:
5. Barnabas' Second Example:
6. Barnabas' Third Example:

7. Living For Christ In A Decadent World.

- A. The decadence in this world is not new. The social life in Antioch was debased, sensual and shocking.
- B. The Church in Antioch: Acts 11:19-22; 23-26; 15:23-29
 1. This was a predominately Gentile city and thus was involved in all the pagan practices.
 2. The Encouragement that Barnabas offered was to "remain true to the Lord." Acts 11:23
 3. This would involve leaving the pagan practices that were inherent sins.
- C. The Church in Rome
 1. Rome was also known for moral degradation.
 2. When Paul wrote his letter to the Romans he had not yet been there. Rom 1:10
 3. He had a strong desire to minister among them so that they might be mutually Encouraged. Rom 1:11-15
 4. The first part of his letter is theological where he informs them about what God had done for them and for all of mankind in Jesus Christ.
 5. Beginning in Chapter 12, Paul outlines what a Christian's response should be to God's Grace and Mercy. Rom 12:1
 6. These verses in Romans 12 help us to understand more clearly how Barnabas might have Encouraged new believers in Antioch to "remain true to the Lord with all their hearts." It is also a high probability that the teaching in Antioch included these principles.
- D. Ephesus was also a pagan city, permeated with a Gentile lifestyle.
 1. After the church was founded in Ephesus, Paul stayed for two years and taught regularly in the School of Tyranus. Acts 19:8-11
 2. The first three chapters of Paul's letter to the Ephesians were similar to the first 11 chapters of Romans, predominantly theological.

3. It is in these chapters that Paul outlined many of the great theological truths of Christianity.
4. When he began Chapter 4, he wrote, "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called."
5. Once again, with different words, believers are Encouraged to "remain true to the Lord with all their hearts."
6. What is found in the second part of the Ephesian letter is in many aspects parallel with Romans 12:1-2.
7. A comparison between Romans and Ephesians:
 - a. God's Mercies Rom 1-11 cf A Christian's calling in Jesus Christ. Eph 1-3
 - b. Rom 12:1 Cf Eph 4:1
 - c. Rom 12:2 Cf Eph 4:17-22 Cf Eph 5:3-4 Cf Eph 4:22-24 Cf Eph 5:15-17
8. One great need for New Testament Christians, especially those who converted out of pagan lifestyles, was to develop a Christian lifestyle that reflected God's holiness, particularly in the area of moral purity.
9. It is sad, but true, that many used this to establish legalisms that they presented as necessary for salvation from the penalty for sin.

E. The 21st-Century Christian and the decadent world.

1. There is a striking parallel between the first century and our own, with this exception: when Christianity was born, the entire world was basically immoral.
2. The pagan world had no Bible to offer righteous standards, while many today have rejected the authority of the Word.
3. On the other hand, the American culture was brought into being by people who were at least outwardly committed to the values of Christianity, and they wrote these values into society's laws.
3. In recent years our standards of sexual morality have rapidly declined and more and more our society is moving toward open and flagrant immorality.
4. We live in a society that actually promotes immorality of almost every kind, and seeks it to be practiced openly under the guise of freedom.