

INSIGHT

The word *edification* literally has to do with "building up". It is every Christian's duty to be a person of edification because it strengthens faith, especially those who are weak or discouraged. All faithful men of God were ministers of edification. Moses encouraged the Israelites not to be afraid of the pursuing Egyptians. For Moses reminded them of the Lord's promise to deliver them from their captors. The result was a saved people (*Exo. 14:10-14,30-31*). Nehemiah, the noble statesman, encouraged the people of Israel not to grow weary in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem. He reminded them of God's awesome power to complete the task in them. The result was a completed wall (*Neh. 4:10, 14, 15; 6:15, 16*). God, Himself, through the prophet Isaiah, encouraged the Israelites not to be dismayed; He reminded them of His nearness and promised them strength (*Isa. 41:10*). Jesus, Himself was an man of encouragement as He reminded the apostles of their heavenly home (*John 14:1-2*); and even He needed encouragement during His hour of trial (*Luke 22:41-43*).

The kingdom of God, the church of Christ, is all about encouragement (*1 Thess. 5:11*). It is all about building up one another with encouraging words (*Eph. 4:29*). It is all about the demonstration of love towards one another, and not just talk; for *knowledge puffs up, but love builds up* (*1 Cor. 1:8b*). It is all about righteousness, peace and joy of the Holy Spirit! (*Romans 14:17*) As to God, it is *righteousness* for the Lord loves righteousness (*Ps. 33:5*). As to our brethren, it is *peace*--to live in peace and love with them. Christ came into the world to be the great peace maker. Finally, as to ourselves, it is the *joy of the Holy Spirit*; to delight ourselves always in the Lord! Surely we serve a great Master, who makes peace and joy so essential to our faith! Be a source of encouragement!

The Attitude in Christ Edification

Key Text: Romans 14:17-19

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men. Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification."

Theme:

True Christianity is called the *kingdom of God*. It is intended to rule us. It is not about foods, but about righteousness, peace and joy of the Spirit. It is in these things we serve Christ and are pleasing to God. For those who truly love the Lord will pursue the things of the Lord. How are we to promote righteousness, peace and joy? Paul tells us how: it is by *mutual edification*. Are you pursuing the things that lead to righteousness, peace and joy? Are you known for your edifying spirit? Are you a source of encouragement?

Application:

Here are some practical suggestions:

1. **Greet** your brother or sister with a loving hug! Hug visitors too! For there is no law against hugging! And I haven't met anyone who hates a hug!
2. **Get to know** your new brethren. Make yourself known to them as Christ made himself known to you!
3. **Call** a brother or sister, especially when they are down or discouraged. Pray with them over the phone, if possible.
4. **Invite** brethren into your home, especially those who you do not know you well. (*Rom. 12:13b*)
5. **Write** letters and cards of encouragement!

May the Lord richly bless you!

task -- Be a ministering angel!

SERMON OUTLINE

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Edification

I. The Church

A. The Threefold Purpose (Rom 14:17)

1. Righteousness--God (behavior)
2. Peace--Brothers (ministering)
3. Joy--Self (salvation)

B. Edification: The Propellant For Success

1. Eph. 4:11-13--Christ's Goal
 - a. Building of His church
--prepare the saints (Gk: *perfecting*)
 - i) bring into an orderly spiritual state
those who were disjointed by sin
 - ii) advance them towards works
of service (Gk: *ministry*)
 - iii) for the building up of the body
 1. maturity in Christ
 2. addition of new members

C. Example from Nehemiah

1. Setting: The Rebuilding of Wall
 - a. Jerusalem lies in ruins after Babylonian captivity.
 - b. Rebuilding of wall unto like the church
 1. Nehemiah's prayer and fasting (1:4f)
 - i. Nehemiah's concern and desire
 - ii. Nehemiah's prayer of humility
 2. Nehemiah's sacrifice to accomplish a great work (2:5)
 3. Cooperation of the people (2:17-18)
 4. The work begins (3)
2. Difficulties Encountered (4:6-15)
 - a. Spiritual hindrances
 - b. Nehemiah's Encouragement
3. Completion of the wall (6:15)

II. Conclusion

1. Jesus needed encouragement to complete His task to which he was called!
(Lk 22:41-43)
2. We need encouragement to complete our

Warm-up:

Have you ever succeeded in a task that was directly linked by the encouragement of others who believed in you?

See To It *Nehemiah 2:1-8; 4:1-14; 6:15*

1. **Read Neh. 2:1-8.** What was Nehemiah's request? Why was he sad?
2. What kind of relationship did Nehemiah have with this king? What kind of reputation should Christians have with outsiders?
3. **Read Neh. 4:1-14.** What happens when a good work is in progress? What happened here?
4. How did Nehemiah overcome these hindrances?
5. **Read Neh. 6:15.** What eventually happened? How was Nehemiah instrumental in the success of the rebuilding of the wall?

Seeing It Closer:

1. How does the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem relate to the church today?
2. How can we be like Nehemiah? How can we be instrumental in building the church? Give some examples.

Getting To It:

Pray for each other to be a people eager to labor in the building up of the church of Christ. Pray that we all can be a people of encouragement, determined to finish the wall of the kingdom!