

Be of Good Cheer

The holiday season is upon us...again. It is a great time to lose control and fall into the mental mood swings of the season. Or maybe not! It is available to control what you think, even in this time of the year. It is easier to control your thinking patterns, if you are eating a steady diet of God's Word. That is mind nourishment that will help during these hectic days.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

It is impossible to think two things at once. One cannot watch two things on television at the same time no matter how good you are with the remote. There is only one picture on the screen at one time. Your mind can be like that. It can flip back and forth, and back and forth. What we want to concentrate on is keeping the thoughts of the Word of God stayed in our minds, rather than concentrating on the thoughts of world.

Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

One of the keys to doing this is to be of good cheer. Since it is impossible to think two things at once, when you are of good cheer, you will not be of negative cheer. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ had some insight into this mindset.

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Jesus was exhorting his disciples to be of good cheer in this world because he has overcome the power of the wicked one. The result of a mind stayed on God's Word is peace.

EW Bullinger defines the statement "of good cheer" as being "well-minded, well-disposed, benign; cheerful." The term "to be of good cheer," he defines as "to be of good courage, take courage, cheer up." Another Greek word translated in English the same way is defined as "to be of a cheerful mind, to be in good spirits."

Now that is the way to approach life today, with a cheerful mind, being in good spirits. After all we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings.

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

The Gospel of Mark has valuable insight into understanding this topic.

Mark 6:30 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

They had been laboring hard with Jesus. Listening to his teachings, helping others, teaching what they had been learning, and assisting Jesus with the work of his ministry. They were doing this to the point of foregoing their own physical needs.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

So much for a day off!

35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

Manageable units, so they could remember the amount of people who benefited from the miracle that day.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And they did all eat, and were filled.

Everyone got their need met to their fullest satisfaction. No one left hungry.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

That is quite a miracle. Feeding 5000 men plus women and children from loaves and two fishes.

45 And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

The tired apostles were still on the lake many hours later, rowing for their lives. The fourth watch was two to six in the morning.

49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

They were physically and mentally exhausted. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

50 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

Be of good cheer, be not afraid. Fear was the prevalent mindset. However, instead of dwelling on the fear, Jesus challenged them to take control of their minds, and change to being of good cheer. They were instructed by Jesus to change the thoughts of fear to the thoughts of encouragement, to thoughts of cheerfulness. After all, Jesus was joining them under these adverse conditions.

51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52 For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.

The miracle of controlling the weather had awoken them to the power of God. They were too busy working, too busy being consumed with the details of the day, to consider the great miracle of the feeding of the 5000 men.

We too need to not forget the greatness of the new birth and what we have been blessed with in this day and time because of the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 9:1 And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

Take courage, wholeness has come to you this day.

3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.

4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

8 But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

The multitudes were in amazement and glorified God, Who had given spiritual power unto men. Power to operate in order to defeat the power of the wicked one.

In the book of Acts, the Apostle Paul was having a rough go of it. He was in the Temple when he was attacked by many Jews who would have killed him if the Roman legions hadn't intervened to rescue him. The mob went insane when he told them God had sent him to teach the Gentiles.

He was saved at the last minute from being scourged by the Roman soldiers because he was a Roman citizen. After spending the night in jail, he was dragged into court to defend himself. After being punched in the mouth by the servants of the high priest, Paul finally gets to defend himself.

Acts 23:6 But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided.

8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.

9 And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.

10 And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.

11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

What a relief it must have been to the Paul when he got the comforting revelation to be of good cheer, to take courage, to be of good courage. God still had a purpose for him, even after going to Jerusalem against God's wishes.

Paul's trip to Rome was also perilous. Once again the encouragement to be of good cheer, to take courage, to hang in there, was sorely needed and received to the fullest.

Acts 27:9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,

10 And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

11 Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

12 And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west.

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.

14 But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.

15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.

16 And running under a certain island which is called Claudia, we had much work to come by the boat:

17 Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.

18 And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship;

19 And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

Paul took courage in what had been relayed to him. Then he was able to encourage others on the ship. Paul understood and believed what had been told him. He could then change his fearful thinking concerning the storm into one of confidence and expectation that God would deliver them. He became of good cheer.

33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.

34 Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

36 Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.

37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

Paul was on his way to Rome to testify before Caesar. He continued to need encouragement as he drew nearer.

Acts 28:15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

Today we need to be encouraged to be of good cheer so as to not let the fiery darts of the wicked one get to us to discourage us, or keep us from being our best for God. We can be of good cheer, of good spirits, because he is coming back and it all will be worth it.

II Corinthians 4:1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

God will send Christ back to gather his saints. Stand until that day, and no matter what situation you find yourself in, be of good cheer, be of a strong courage.