

Theme for 2018

**WE ARE THE ARMY OF GOD &
WE ARE ARMED AND DANGEROUS!**

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)



This Week’s Thought – November 4, 2018

“There we found some brothers and sisters who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome. The brothers and sisters there had heard that we were coming, and they traveled as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us. At the sight of these people Paul thanked God and was encouraged.” Acts 28:14-15 (NIV)

In the final chapters of Acts, Paul finds himself enduring incredible trials. As he’s transported to Rome in the midst of a significant legal trial, he finds himself caught in a storm at sea, shipwrecked on the island of Malta for months, and even attacked by a viper! Understandably, he’s incredibly happy to finally arrive safely in Rome. Yet his joy and encouragement isn’t simply from safe arrival but is found in the support and love he receives from Christians in that city.

Acts tells us that Paul gave thanks and was encouraged at the very sight of these fellow believers (Acts 28:15). There is an incredible bond of love and affection that exists between Christians. Even though many of them had likely never met Paul before, they knew he was family, that they were connected to one another. To be united to Christ is to be united to His people. To know the love of Christ is to love the people He loves. To receive the grace of God is to be a person who gives grace and goes out of their way to offer encouragement to those who need it the most.

As you read and ponder this story today, you may find yourself identifying with Paul. You feel as though life has been a steady stream of storms, shipwrecks, and snakebites! Have these challenges driven you into isolation? Have you closed yourself off from sources of hope and encouragement?

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The Christian life is never meant to be lived alone. Allow yourself to receive the gift of community. Choose vulnerability and transparency so you can receive the gift of God’s grace given to you by brothers and sisters in faith.

On the other hand, today you may be in a place of strength in your life and faith. Perhaps like these early Christians who made great sacrifices traveling long distances to care for their brother Paul, you too are being invited to sacrificially reach out in love to people in need of encouragement and refreshment. The strength and courage you have isn’t just for your own comfort and consolation, it is given to you for the sake of others. Boldly be a blessing and agent of God’s grace in someone’s life today!

“And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone.” (1 Thessalonians 5:14)

Application: How can you seek out the encouragement of community in your life today? How can you be a blessing to someone in need of refreshment? Thank God for the gift of community, and be reminded that we are invited to bear one another’s burdens and travel together as His people throughout life’s journey.

Words from the Master during your time of reflection this week: “My unfailing Love is your ‘fuel’. This supernatural source of energy flows through you freely as you look to Me in trust. Not only does this increase your energy level; it also provides a path for Me to love other people through you. Let My limitless Love energize and empower you as you live and love Me as well as others.” (1 Corinthians 13:12; Colossians 1:29; Ephesians 3:16-19)

“And then God answered: "Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It's on its way. It will come right on time.” Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King