

Monthly Scripture Focus: April 2024

A Scripture Commentary for Every Ministry in First Baptist Church, Manassas



To Ministry Leader: Please have this scripture read at your monthly in-person or online meeting /activity/rehearsal at least one time this month.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS FOR THIS MONTH: **1 Thessalonians 5:11-13:** “Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. ¹³ Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work.”

COMMENTARY: ENCOURAGE AND BUILD

We all know what a blessing it is to be around positive people, those who make others smile. Such people can brighten what may seem to be the dreariest of days, or most dire circumstances. Unfortunately, we also know negative people who can leave us feeling drained, discouraged, and defeated. From time to time, we each should ask ourselves: Which one am I – one who encourages or one who “drains”?

Barnabas, whose name means “Son of Encouragement” (Acts 4:36) was the Apostle Paul’s friend. He was a leader in the early church and a welcome companion to Paul when they were rejected and *even* beaten up on their mission journey together in Acts 13 and 14 because he cheered Paul.

Paul reminded the Thessalonians to be wise, sober, and unafraid in the dark times they were living in. This scripture reminds us, Christians, living in these challenging times, to do the same. We should wear faith, love, and hope as armor. We should be positive in that armor, encouraged and strengthened in Christ for the challenges that will come our way.

Take a moment this month to think about those people who have spoken words of encouragement that inspired you to push forward or to keep going. Also, we encourage you to build up each other and encourage each other to look to God...” who is able to do *exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think.*” (Ephesians 3:20).

Let us emulate Barnabas. Recognize and value other’s gifts and contributions to the work of moving the Kingdom forward. Thank others for the ways they bless your life. Be that positive person who invites a smile and brings out the best in those around.

Oh, to be a Barnabas! What a wonderful life goal and gift!