ENCOURAGE THE FAINTHEARTED

We are currently studying a series entitled, **Let Not Your Hearts Be Troubled**, taken from (John 14:1 and 27).

These lessons are designed to give you the spiritual tools to cope with crisis in Christian way of life. At the present, we are coping with the world-wide Covid-19 crisis.

English Definition: "Crisis is an unstable or crucial time or state of affair in which a decisive change is impending."

Whenever God shuts down an entire world with a life threatening virus, it is an alarm to the world's need for the gospel of grace salvation; and the Church's responsibility to meet their need both locally and globally (Acts 1:8; Matt.28:18-20). It is also a time for the Church to equip believers with the spiritual tools for coping with this crisis (2 Tim.3:16-17).

The context of our next lessons is (1 Thess.5:12-28). It lists the problems and spiritual solutions to dealing with crisis in Christian way of life. Paul listed them by 17 imperatives (commands).

- The first 16 are present imperatives   (1 Thess.5:13-25)   Live in peace
- The last one is an aorist imperative   (1 Thess.5:26)   Greet

These 17 imperative tenses list ministry opportunities for spiritually advancing believers during times of crisis.

A second spiritual tool from Paul's list for dealing with crisis in life
"Encourage the Fainthearted" (1 Thess5:14)

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1. **Notice that Paul gave the spiritual solution before addressing the spiritual problem.**

   (1 Thess.5:14) "Encourage (paramuthe<u>omai</u>/ p.m.impv.2pl) the fainthearted (tous oligopsuchos)."

   Notice that Paul did the same thing with all four problems listed in (1 Thess.5:14) (read).

   The spiritual solution to the fainthearted is encouragement (paramutheomai).

   NOTE: This is not the same Greek word used for the spiritual gift of exhortation or encouragement (Rom.12:8) (paraklesis).

   - **Paraklesis** is the spiritual capability and adaptability to exhort, encourage, and comfort by the function of the spiritual gift of exhortation by means of the ministry of indwelling Holy Spirit.

   - **Paramutheomai** is the spiritual growth capacity to encourage others to do the right things Scripturally by showing sympathy through comforting speech of truth of categorical Bible doctrine of God's word. (1 Thess.2:11-12; John 11:17-19, 30-31) This word is used at the funeral of Lazarus (bereavement).

2. **The Greek word for "fainthearted" is oligopsuchos.**

   It is a compound word of
   - **oligos:**   **small,** a shrinking of the believer's world whether real or imagined (Ex.6:6-9/ Rom.4:21)
   - **psuchos**   **feeble soul**.
     - It is rarely used in koine Greek.

It has the idea of losing heart and becoming despondent or fainthearted. It has the idea of becoming overwhelmed by stressful circumstances of life and becoming distressed and despondent in dealing with it (Isa.57:15)   [lowly of spirit]   (Heb.4:12).

The danger of being fainthearted is where it can lead you.

    (Prov.18:14) "The spirit of a man endures his sickness, but as for a <u>broken spirit </u>who can bear it?"
    (Prov.15:13) "A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, But when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken".
    (Prov.15:15) "All the days of the afflicted are bad, But a cheerful heart *has* a continual feast".

3. **The antidote to faintheartedness is the <u>ministry of encouragement</u> (paramuthomai).**

Paramutheomai ministry is designed by God to stimulate and correct one's thinking about adversities of life

- (Rom.8:28)
- (1 Kings 17:7-16)
- (Luke 4:25-26)
- (1 Cor.14:3) (consolation).

Faintheartedness reflects a failure of the **faith cycle,** especially on the <u>application-completion side!</u>

One example was the Israelite army cowardly response when challenged by a Philistine named Goliath! (fear to freight to flight)

David's courage to do the right thing in face of danger stimulated and corrected the thinking of Israel's army. (1 Sam.17:23-24; 32-37, 51-53)

- Fight the good fight of faith   (1 Tim.6:12)
- The battle is the Lord's   (1 Sam.17:46-47)

THE FAITH CYCLE