

“Time of Encouragement”

By Brother Parrish Lee

Sunday, July 27th, 2014

I'm very thankful to be here. I'm very, very thankful to be here. Not thankful a whole lot for technology, today. Not thankful for the relationship between my computer and my printer today. Not thankful for that, but I am thankful for the blessings of God. And I'm amazed; really, I'm amazed at the paths and the ways that God takes us through and glorious things that He gives us. Did you ever—did somebody ever give you something and it was a surprise? I mean, they gave you something, and you know you didn't deserve a certain blessing? Did you ever have a birthday party and you get showered with gifts? Some of those gifts are like, “Wow! I was kind of liking this; I was kind of wanting this! And, it's because of my birthday that I got it, but, if I really stop to think about it, maybe they put more of a sacrifice than I thought should have been necessary just for the fact that it was my birthday.” Getting a gift, when you realize it is greater for you than you have been to anything else for. I'm very thankful, very thankful.

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Parrish Lee. Andy and myself, we lead the fellowship here, and we are very blessed. I'm very blessed to work with Andy, Andy and his wife, of course, because, as the Bible says, those two, literally, are one. They work together very well; it's a great example to somebody like me. As we have said already, our theme for the month is from the Book of Luke, chapter twenty-two, and it's verse thirty-two. Very great scripture here.

Luke 22:32 *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

“...strengthen thy brethren.” If I could ask—that is our theme for the month—but, if I could ask—where is Brother Todd at? You know, I haven't heard you read in a while, and I know I didn't warn you, but if you wouldn't mind coming up, reading from the Book of Luke chapter twenty-two, and this time we'd like to read verses twenty-six through thirty-four. It's great to have you back up, Brother Todd. This brother, for those of you who don't know, is an example. Where did you go for two years? TODD: “I went to Everett Washington for one year.” Was that one year? Did anybody get saved in that one year? TODD: “Yeah, we had seventeen baptisms; God is good.”

Luke 22:26-34 *But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And He said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.*

If we could bow our heads for just a moment. Lord, we thank You, because, God, when we just nail ourselves down and think about it, you pour out daily benefits and blessings that explode in our lives. You keep us in times, God, that we can't even remember; things that we even take for granted.

So, we take this opportunity to come before You, and just to bless Your name, and to say thank You, oh great God in Heaven. Lord Jesus, for the price that you paid, we thank You for Calvary's cost, how You looked and saw every one of us. We thank You for this service and worship time that we come to offer to You praise. We pray that, at this time, that You would add a blessing to the reading and the going over of Your Word, God, that it would, and You said in Your Word, not return unto You void, but that it would do exactly that which You have sent it to do. In Jesus' name, we both pray and claim, and everyone said, Amen.

Giving honor to God who is the Head of my life, and giving honor to all those who have gone before us, whom God was the head of their lives. Giving honor to those who have paved the path, from our founding pastor, he and his family, and the sacrifices and everything that they made—when I think about it, because I have to put myself in remembrance of the price that other Christians have paid. From Apostle Paul to Timothy, from Peter to James, and all down through the ages, those who, with great cost to their lives, have kept the word of God that we might be able to have it here in 2014, who have kept the Spirit of God going in their lives and passed it on to those generations down that we would know that God has always been in the saving business. Giving honor to all those who have gone on before us. Giving honor to every one of you who prepare your hearts and bring them before the Lord and say, "Lord, I'm going to Your worship place that I might present myself unto You, a living sacrifice, wholly and acceptable unto God which is my reasonable service, for I know that You will bless me accordingly. Giving honor to all of y'all.

As Brother Todd read our Scripture thought from the Book of Luke, chapter twenty-two, we see that the Lord had promised unto those that continued with Him, and, yes, this is the month of encouragement, it's amazing, all of y'all that came back from the conference—Amazing!—every one of you that came back, came back with such a good report, made me so jealous that I didn't get a chance to go. But, that shows how God is not stilled, not stayed, not hindered, because you brought a blessing back, and, hopefully, you were able to hear that God wasn't on hold here while you were there. But that God was still in the same business no matter where His people are, he hears their cries. It was such a blessing—this being the month of encouragement, we had several things going on. But, as we look there to where the Lord was speaking to Peter, He told him, "You are going to have such a wonderful time with Me, because you have continued with Me, through my temptations." And he told him of more blessings to come, and then Peter, he turned around and the Lord told Peter, "You know, Satan, he wants to sift you, man. He wants to pull you apart." We talked about that on July 5th, when we were going over the service there. We talked about how the devil's out to pull this country apart, and he desires to pull any Christian apart. He desires to get up in there and chop up anything that's godly, and turn it back to him. That is the devil's mantra. That is his modus operandi; that is what he's all about. But we see that the Lord said, "I have prayed for you..." I have prayed for you... "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not..." Your faith fail not... "...and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." When you are converted, strengthen your brothers. Of course, Peter went and said, "Oh, Lord, don't you know that ain't nothing going to keep me from you? I'll go with you everywhere." The Lord told him, "Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, you know what? before the cock crows in the morning time, you're going to three times deny Me. Before the crack of dawn hits..."—they say that's when roosters crow; I ain't a farmer, so I don't know, but I've heard that's the way it is: at the crack of dawn, that's when the rooster crows. That's what I've heard. Any farmers in here? Oh, yeah, really? Okay; Y'all aren't farmers, y'all are just country boys. There's a difference. Still, still, still, I don't know, I never been to that place where I hear the cock crow in the morning. I've never heard that, and I ain't missed it, either. I haven't heard it, but he told him, "Before the cock crows in the morning, you're going to deny me thrice." After He told him, "Satan wants to sift you as wheat, but I've prayed for you," and Peter said what any one of us would say, "Lord, I don't want to leave you; I'm going to make sure I make my mind up and I'm going to be with You," and the Lord turns around, right on the spot, and says, "You

know what? you are going to deny Me. You are going to deny Me.” I’ve always thought, “What a contradiction going on here. In one fell swoop, “I prayed for you that your strength fail not...” and right behind that, “Oh, but you’re going to deny me; before the crack of dawn, you’re going to deny Me three times.” What a contradiction. How is his faith not going to fail, and then, all of the sudden, he’s going to deny You? What’s going on? What I failed to realize is that the Lord of glory, the Lord Himself, knows me. He knew Peter, and He knew everything he was going to be going through. He knows our goings in, and He knows our comings out (Isaiah 37:28). He knows our ins, he knows what we do at the secret times, He knows when we cut things short, He knows when we sleep a little bit too long, He knows when the computer don’t work; our Lord knows it all and He can tell you, and then He goes and He makes you the boss. “I’ve prayed for you. I’ve done that so that your strength fail not.” If that was just to Peter, and Peter alone, that would not have needed to be recorded, but it was to the disciples, “...that your faith fail not, and when you are converted...” Converted; I had to look that up. Converted, when you are turned, when you are encouraged in the Lord, when you come back, strengthen your brothers. When God delivers you, puts it in your life, gives you a victory, strengthen those around you. This present isn’t meant to be locked in a box, put away, and not shared. It’s the type of thing that when you take it and give it, it multiplies and comes back. That when you—you!—are converted, when you are strengthened, when you come back to the Lord, strengthen your brethren. Strengthen your brethren.

You know, I find myself blessed because, how many times—and you know, I wasn’t always a Christian, I know some people were raised in Christianity, they have that testimony, I think that’s awesome... I wasn’t raised Christian, in fact, I used to fight against Christians, so, for me to be a person whom God would show mercy to, it’s astounding; it’s mind-blowing. And, to me, I also inherit those same promises. For all that stuff that I did before I came to the knowledge of the Lord, I still receive the same promises. He didn’t say, “well, you came in at the last part; you have all this and that going on in your life. You only have that much hope; everybody else has a lot more, because they’ve been Christians all their lives, but you, you get a thimble-full, and if you mess up, it’s over.” No, He said, “You, too, when you are labored and heavy-laden, I’ll give you rest, too, if you come to Me.” He said, “You know what? You, when your sins are like scarlet and like crimson, I, the Lord, will make them as white as wool.” (Isaiah 1:18) He said, “You, when your faith begins to fail and when you can’t see, I give you the promise that no weapon that is formed against you will prosper (Isaiah 54:17). I give you that promise.” If I trust Him, I receive the same promise that anybody who comes to Him and trusts in the Lord.

Now, we said this is the month of encouragement. There are a lot of things going on this month. I heard one of the things that was going on, I think it was last week, when Sonia and Linda were talking about how the women’s prayer meeting went. It was great to hear about it, because, you know, they aid the women gathered together and one of the things that they did was they took the burdens, and they put them on cards, and they wrote them down and they made sure that they were going to take these things to the God that they believed in. And another thing that they did was they had to cast out any worries that they had. Whoever wasn’t there, that wasn’t their concern; who was there is who we’re taking it before the Lord; we’re the ones in this room that the Lord’s going to use today. Then she said that they took turns, and they went around, and all the ladies prayed. I forget how many she said. But the thing that she said that I got such a blessing out of was, she said, “You know who else was there? Tennessee and Jailed, and they prayed, too.” Our young ladies went and took it before the Lord, also. I felt like my heart was going to leap out of my chest, because, saints, let that be our testimony; not that we *tell* our children to pray, but that we *have the example* before them in prayer. When it comes to prayer, not pointing a direction, but, showing them, but taking them by the hand. And I understand—I understand how it can be with thinking, “Oh, they’re just going to be bored. They’re just going to lose their patience. They’ll probably be turned off; they’ll get in the way. Oh, it’s just going to be too much, and it might hinder.” I’ll tell you this much: In June, we had a prayer meeting, we had a men’s prayer meeting, and we had young brother Maxx there. And, as Brother Mike said, it was such a

blessing. If you ever find yourself getting to the place where—if you are one of those people who find yourself despising the youth of others, like they are never going to be able to do some of those great, wonderful things, then you need to grab a hold of that spirit, and cast it out, and say, “Get thee behind me!” because I know God was working in me when I was young. He was desiring to move in my life when I was young; putting seeds in there... What we need is the same God over all of our young people. And, then, the last men’s prayer meeting, we had Brother Jose’s son—Armando, is it?—Jose Armando, he was there smiling. I know—the prayer meeting lasted for two hours—and for a young man to stand up and to be with all these grown men for two hours, I’m sure that could have been a little cumbersome. I’m sure it could have worn him out to a point. But, I’m also sure that the time will come, when he’s thirteen and fourteen and fifteen and sixteen, when somebody says, “We’ve got a problem! We need to pray!” he can raise his hand and say, “Okay, let’s pray.” “You know how to pray?” “Yeah, I’ve seen it. I’ve seen my father do it; I’ve seen other brothers and sisters do it. They pray, and they look for God to move.” Let that be our testimony. If we’re going to have a testimony, let it be that our young people see us doing the Christian thing. Let it be that other brothers and sisters know we pray because we pray with them. If we’re going to have a testimony, let it be a testimony of God.

Back to the message, here, this being the month of encouragement, we want to say, right off the bat, that God wants us to be encouraged. God wants us to be encouraged, and He gives us things to be encouraged by. He gives us things—yes, yes—He gives every one of us things to be encouraged by. Great Bible study last Wednesday night, Brother Bill, 41, 43 people were there, and it was so packed out, we had standing room, almost in the other room. We went past the counter—it was marvelous that people would pack out a coffee shop because they might hear the Word of the Lord. They might hear some other kind words as they fellowshiped, but there wasn’t a whole lot of side conversations, there wasn’t people looking at the ceiling all bored, no. There was attentiveness and a spirit of willingness. Isn’t that awesome? That’s awesome.

Matthew 16:9 *Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?*

Of course, there’s a whole message in the fishes and the loaves and how God multiplied, and what the baskets were, and why there were fragments. There’s so much of a message there, but the Lord said, “Do you not remember the loaves, the five loaves of five thousand?” Do you not remember? Because, why? of course, that was only good for a meal, maybe a whole day; might have lasted for three days... But why is the Lord Jesus, why is He bringing this up now? Do you know why God that back up? Because the Lord wants us to live in those blessings. He wants you to remember, because as soon as you remember what God did for you, it puts you right back into it. Oh, yeah, you know what? I can say, personally, I remember, back in 1984, I believe it was, in Pusan, South Korea, falling in the water, and God kept me from drowning. You know what I’ve got to say to that? thank You, Jesus! I remember, three years ago, on a road, on my way to work, and my truck flipping all across the highway. Everybody that saw the accident—yeah, it was a big one—everybody that saw it wasn’t just amazed that I survived, they were amazed that I got out and walked! I recall the fire department—they’d already called the ambulance—they didn’t know! When they saw me walk, they couldn’t believe it. You know what I’ve got to say to that? thank You, Jesus! Yeah! So, many years ago, people who knew me when I was Muslim can’t believe what coming to a risen Savior, the change it has made in little old me. You know what I have to say to that? Hallelujah, Lord, God on high! The Lord wants you to remember what He has done for you. He wants you to be in it—He told them over and over again, “Did I not bring you with a Great Hand from Egypt?” Why? So that you could no that, “No matter what I go through, God on high is able.” No matter what it is; no matter what the weapon is; no matter what the circumstances; no matter what the weather’s coming along; no matter what the financial situation looks like, if I trust Him,

He will do it. God wants us to live in those blessings, so, saints, we remember the five loaves. For us, maybe—for me it's a job. It's a job, and it's transportation, and it's food, and it's waking up, it's a bed to sleep in, it's a house over my head, for me, it's everyday people who will talk to me like I'm anybody. To be able just to have some friends. Hallelujah! Thank You, God, for all of that! I remember the times when it wasn't like this. I remember—look at what God, You have done for me. Look at what He has done for us. So, God wants us to be encouraged, and He gives us things to be encouraged by.

Genesis 9:15 *And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.*

So, we see here, saints, that God remembers His covenant. He remembers His covenant to every one of us. "Oh, what's His covenant?" What's His covenant? that He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son... (John 3:16) "That's His covenant?" Yeah. You know what else His covenant is? that He will never leave you, nor forsake you (Hebrews 13:5). Know what else His covenant is? "When your sins are as scarlet, I, the Lord, will make them white as snow." (Isaiah 1:18) It's His covenant! You know what else His covenant is? that if I hold to His unchanging hand, and if I build my life on things eternal, I will rise in the morning when the glory comes in that great day. That's a covenant that I will either be in the grave and called up when the trumpet sounds, or I will rise to meet Him in the air. That's how it's done. And, you know, along with these covenants, and other things to be encouraged by, God gives us something else: He gives us a calling. He gives every one of us a calling. Yes, a calling to be encouraged by. Now, with your calling—we're going to be going to the Book of Numbers. How could we leave out Numbers? You guys came back from the conference; how could we not say it? So, when the Lord gave them a calling—you know when you get a calling to do something—whether it's on a team, whether it's in the house, whether it's on the job—you could be called to wash the dishes; you could be called to run a football; you could be called to take a gift to somebody; you're called to do it. With whatever calling you're given, you're also given something else. This is what you're given: You get a testimony. What do you do with your calling?

Numbers 13:16 *These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua.*

So, their calling was to go and spy out the land. They hadn't gotten to the testimony part, yet. But, along with that, he was given something else: He was given a name. He was given a name. Yeah, his name was Jehoshua. Jehoshua has a meaning: Jehoshua means deliverer. Deliverer; deliverer. With that, he was going to have a testimony. With each one of us, with every person who accepts the Lord Jesus Christ, we also are given a name. Firstly, it's the family name, the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ; that's part of our calling. You get born again, when you come up, you're given that family name. But, that's not all that you're given. You are also given a testimony and you are given a calling of things to do. Now, with that calling comes your testimony, and that is up to every one of us. It could be great, or it could be maybe not so great. That's always a choice.

Mark 3:14-18 *And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: And Simon he surnamed Peter; And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite,*

Of course, verse nineteen talks about Judas Iscariot, the one who also betrayed Him... But he called the twelve unto Him, and He called them by name. Some He gave new names right there on the spot, others became known by their testimony. Of course, we know Simon He surnamed Peter, which means, a rock. A stone. He also called James and John, He called them the sons of thunder, which also means they were the sons of commotion. They liked to stir it up; they'd go in hoping and looking for who they could share with. "Oh, you really need to hear about the Lord." "Aah, I don't want to hear about the Lord." "But you *need* to hear about Him." The sons of thunder. And I always wondered—you know, you look at them, and why would He go to the other Simon and call him a Canaanite? Why is that important? I know you're thinking about a little bit of distinction between the two, but is that really important? Of course that's important. This, by interpretation means that this Simon was called the [zealot](#), the one who had a lot of zeal for the Lord. And, of course, the last one, of course, was Judas. Each had a testimony; it wasn't apparent at the moment, but as time went on you got a chance to see that testimony became associated with your name, and that also leads to reputation. After you do a few things, we all know that changing your reputation takes a lot of work, like the works that you have in your life. It takes a lot of work when you start to do good, and when you want to do bad, people kind of correct you on the spot: "You are not supposed to do that! You are a person that's a goody-two-shoes!" And, when you're bad and you start to do things good, people are surprised. "What are *you* doing something good like that?" Because they get associated with your testimony. So, we see that by their names that they were given, just like we are given names—you get a name from your household; you get it from your dad... Time of encouragement. So, what happens is, you are born into your family—my last name is Lee; my family's name is Lee. My mom gave me a name that none of the rest of my relatives had: She gave me the name Parrish. Parrish was a guy—have you ever seen the [movie](#)?—Parrish was a guy who wanted to make his own way. He was headstrong, but he was successful. He actually joined the Navy, that guy. I asked my mom, "What did you do, prophesy over me? You sent me in the Navy; why did you think it so strange?" But, the same thing holds true for all of us. We're given a name to be able to do something, to be able to become something. Of course, that was material, that was physically, by me earthly family, but your Lord and Savior gives you a name, a testimony, a reputation, also, and that to follow. So, we're called to be an encouragement to the family. To the family. As Jehoshua and Caleb, as they were talking about, came back, as they came back, they brought a report. So did the other ten, they brought back a report. Chris, you said something in your message last week, you said that death and life are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21). It's amazing how they could come to a tribe—now, you've got to think that was a million people that came over the Red Sea. One million people that came over. Yeah, it was a long time bringing that whole crowd over. But, a million people, and of that million people that came over, they had twelve tribes; everybody belonged to one of the twelve tribes. So, if you divided it down, there's somewhere around 80,000 people per tribe, give or take. One person from each tribe was called. Brother Rod said, you know they were all leaders. They were all leaders, and they were called. It had to be important what report they brought back. They were bringing it back to their tribe. They were bringing it back to their family, to their household. They were bringing it back to the nation. So, what you have is twelve people; two brought a good report, to encourage their people, their tribe, their family. Ten people did not, and ten people discouraged the heart of a nation. A nation; they discouraged the heart of a million people. Because death and life is in the power of our tongue. Now, we might not know a million people. We might not know 80,000 people, but we do know our families. We do have a sphere of influence, each one of us. We each do, and we speak as God has given us the power of death and life; it's in the power of our tongue. So we are asked, we are given the commission to bring back good reports, encouraging words to our families, and to our tribes. To sum it up, from the Book of Numbers, once again—so, to sum it up, coming from the conference and going forward

Numbers 13:30 *And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.*

We are able to overcome it. We are able to overcome this battle that has been given to us. As Caleb said, let us go up and overcome it, there is an answer to that:

Revelation 3:21 *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

Let us go up and possess the land that God has given us, for we are able to overcome it through the Lord that called us! And the Lord says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, as I am with my Father in his throne."

And, our last point: The promise that God has given to all His people, If you ever think that you don't have enough to encourage somebody, you can take good counsel in this. If you ever think that maybe the battle is a little too much, or maybe has left you out, or maybe you think that you're forgotten, you can take encouragement from this:

Jeremiah 29:11-14 *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*

