

SMALL GROUP LESSON

AS IRON SHARPENS IRON, OUR NEED FOR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

ROMANS 1:8-16, HEBREWS 10:19-25

SEPTEMBER 25, 2016

When Paul wrote to the Romans, expressing his desire to visit them, he stated, "I'm eager to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours. In this way, each of us will be a blessing to the other" (NLT). In other words, he realized that encouragement is vitally important to our well being as Christians. It helps us to grow strong in our faith. It is something that we need to both give and receive from one another. With that in mind, take a few moments to read Romans 1:8-16, especially verses 10-12, and Hebrews 10:19-25, especially verses 24-25. Also, go to <http://www.bedfordpresbyva.org/sermons/weekly-sermons-text.html> and review the pastor's sermon on these passages of Scripture. Then take a look at these three questions and give some careful thought as to how they might apply to your life:

1. In the pastor's sermon he states that the word Paul uses for **encouragement** can be literally translated as "to call near." In other words we are calling out to others to join us, to be close by, perhaps to help us in some way. Why is this desire for encouragement so important? Why do we need to be encouraged and why do we need to encourage one another?
2. What are some of the ways that we can encourage one another, especially as this relates to the idea of Christian fellowship? Why are these two words, **encouragement** and **fellowship**, so closely tied to one another?
3. When should I put encouragement into practice, and with whom should it be shared? Although this was not specifically addressed in the sermon, it is nevertheless something which we need to keep in mind as we seek to live the Christian way of life.