

“Say Something”

The Ministry of Encouragement

Intro:

Today I want to talk to you about encouraging one another and even more specifically, using our words to encourage. We serve an ever encouraging God and He is calling us deeper into this ministry of encouragement with Him.

Definition:

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, [25] not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

- Encourage - to comfort, cheer up, console, speak in a friendly manner.
- The life giving power of our words and actions expressed outwardly to one another.
- Does require effort and intentionality, but leaves us feeling exhilarated and uplifted

The Importance of Encouragement:

Words are important, wouldn't you say? Words have power. They carry weight.

Proverbs 18:21

The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

- ***MSG: Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.***
- ***(No middle ground)*** - You are either using your words to give life or using them to cause death.
- **(STICKS AND STONES)**

As we talk about encouragement today, my hope is that we'll all see just how important it is. We'd all probably agree that encouraging one another is important, but does it really have the place in your life it should. Do you feel encouraged on a regular basis? Or is there some pretty serious lack of that in your life? I think there is a serious void in this area and we have got to learn to let encouraging our brothers and sisters have its proper place in our daily walk.

When we aren't actively cultivating an environment of encouragement we start living in relational starvation mode. Without it, we carry on, but weakened. We have enough energy for ourselves maybe, but nothing to spare. This less-than-energizing kind of Christianity probably feels normal to many of us. Maybe we can't even imagine how life-giving it is to be frequently, strongly encouraged and encouraging.

Why aren't we in a constant state of encouragement?

We aren't in heaven. We are here. Where things die, where there is disappointment and sin. We have enemies ... yes capitol E and lowercase e. **Steal, Kill and Destroy**

1 Peter 5:8-10

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Dis-COURAGE (Robbed of courage)

1. The Enemy is actively doing everything he can to discourage
2. IDENTITY, CALLING, WORSHIP (Boldly approach the throne room)

En-COURAGE (Restored of courage)

1. IDENTITY, CALLING. WORSHIP

The Source, The Church and The World

The Source:

God is the ultimate source of all encouragement. Through His word, through His Son and through the Holy Spirit.

1. His Word - Psalms 119 (read the whole thing - 176 verses)

Psalms 119:28

My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.

Romans 15:4

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

The believer was never meant to have a casual, surface-ie relationship with the Word. It's our life-source. I would argue that it could be the most practical way that we can receive daily encouragement from the Lord... From His lips to our hearts.

2. His Son: Jesus as our example

The word personified. The word made flesh. So he is everything the Word is, but he is also our example.

He saw through peoples flaws and told people who they really were. New Names.

- Jesus calling Peter the rock. Get behind me. Denial. Didn't matter to Jesus. He saw the real Peter and he chose to speak life into him.
- Mary Magdalene. The world had deemed her unworthy. Demon possessed. Jesus saw a disciple. First one to see him after he was raised.
- Zacchaeus, words of life.

3. Holy Spirit: Jesus preparing the disciples for His departure

John 14:26-27

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. [27] Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

Helper, translated is the noun form of there word encourage. Someone to stand with us. **AN EMPOWERING PRESENCE.**

GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT. WE HAVE TO START THERE BEFORE LOOKING OUTWARD. AND AS WE RECEIVE OUR ENCOURAGEMENT FROM HIM, HE WILL CALL US TO POUR THAT OUT TO OTHERS.

The Church:

Covid and this last year or so did a lot of discouraging, right? I know my hand is raised. In talking with our elders “the very things we are about as a church have been robbed from us”. I need to admit, I’ve failed at this over the last year. I’ve had to repent for the ways I’ve not been obedient in this area. See, my discouragement caused me to shrink back. Caused me to turn inward, caused me loose sight. Easy to hide behind a mask. Easy to go back to old Alex who was scared to talk to people, scared he would mess up, scared he would fill in the blank ... remember **discouraged = robbed of courage.**

Easy to look back and wonder, pointless. Now is the time to re-learn how to live together in Christ. I can’t think of a better place to start than encouraging one another.

- Free and wide spread (religious spirit bad)
- Don’t need to be all that careful / vs. correction
- You do need the right motivation (zero expectations) not transactional. Thats not the kingdom. The kingdom is pouring ourselves out and expecting nothing in return .. except for Jesus to refill us.
- No plan needed
- Get’s our eyes off of ourselves.

Don’t wait on others to do this

Some have a special gift of encouragement. If you’re like me, you have a lot to learn from those people. But a lack of gifting is not an excuse for disobedience in this area. This is absolutely a part of our call as a believer. It’s not optional.

"Encouragement is what the gospel feels like as it moves from one believer to another. The ministry of encouragement, therefore, isn’t optional or just for people with a knack for it. Real encouragement has authority over us all. It deserves nothing less than to set the predominant tone of our churches, our homes, our ministries.” -Ray Ortlund / Desiring God

ex. Lifegroup - encouraging me over the fight with Daniel

Romans 15:1-7

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. [2] Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. [3] For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." [4] For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. [5] May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, [6] so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. [7] Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. (UNITY)

The World:

This area of encouragement is the very link to the world we are trying to save. It's the bridge.

John 13:35

By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." so.... What is the world saying about us now? What are they observing about the Church?

Not surprised by the world, but by the church.

Ripping each other apart, Leaving churches, throwing stones.

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. This has been a problem way before Covid. Sowing and reaping.

When there is a lack of encouragement, there is a lack of unity and when the church lacks unity it loses its effectiveness to preach the real Gospel of Jesus.

Jesus Bride so full of life that it overflows into the world. That's how we're going to see the lost get saved.

Guys I love you ... but the time is NOW! We have to respond to this.

Encouraging through your own discouragement:

As we pour out, He pours in. (The widow)

- Husband dead
- In debt
- All she had was one jar of oil

We aren't the source, we are the vessel.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Conclusion:

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