

HOW TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS



A Study Outline

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How You Can be an Encourager

I. EVERYBODY NEEDS ENCOURAGEMENT

- A. What tends to get most Christians discouraged today?
- B. If Christians are to get personal encouragement from reading the Bible and praying, why does the Bible instruct us to encourage other believers?
- C. Should we encourage other Christians *only* when they are discouraged? Why, or why not?
- D. "Encourage" means to comfort or inspire

II. EVEN GREAT PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE NEEDED ENCOURAGEMENT

- A. Solomon got discouraged when he realized the futility of life.
Ecclesiastes 2:17, "So I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind."
- B. Nehemiah was sad and discouraged when he was told about the poor state of Jerusalem after the exile.
Neh. 2:3 "Why should my face not look sad when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?"
- C. Elisha the prophet was so discouraged that he wanted to die. He was being pursued by Jezebel, wife of Ahab king of Israel, who wanted to kill him because of what he did to the priests of Baal at Mount Carmel.
1 Kings 19:3-7 Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, ⁴ while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." ⁵ Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." ⁶ He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. ⁷ The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you."
- D. The Christians in Thessalonica were discouraged because they believed that people who died before the return of Jesus were eternally lost.

III. HOW TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS GOD'S WAY

- *Acts 15:32 Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers.*
- *Romans 12:6-8 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; ...*

- *Ephesians 6:21-22* Tychicus, the dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing. ²² I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you.
- *1 Thessalonians 3:2* ² We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith,
- *1 Thessalonians 4:16-18* For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.
- *1 Thessalonians 5:11* Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.
- *1 Thessalonians 5:14* ¹And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.
- *2 Thessalonians 2:16-17* May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷ encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.
- *Hebrews 3:13* But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.
- *Hebrews 10:25* ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

IV. DISCOVERING MORE ABOUT ENCOURAGING OTHERS

- A. What does 1 Kings 19:1-18 teach us about encouraging others who become physically and emotionally exhausted as a result of stress?

Answer: They often need food and rest.

- B. What does 1 Thessalonians 1:1-4 teach us about encouraging someone who is spiritually young and perhaps confused about the Christian life?

Answer: Notice four aspects of Paul's encouragement to these young Christians in Thessalonica: 1) He told them he was praying for them, 2) he pointed out their work produced by faith, 3) their labor of love, and 4) their endurance which was based on their hope in Christ. He was affirming their spiritual growth

- C. The word for encourage in the Bible means to be "called alongside to help." Which people are the most capable of "coming alongside to help"? See 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Answer: 2 Cor. 1:3-4. "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

Those who have gone through similar experiences

- D. Paul encouraged the Thessalonian Christians by complimenting their endurance which was inspired by their hope in the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 1:3). What did Paul mean by their "hope in the Lord Jesus Christ"?

Answer: The hope that Jesus will someday return.

V. FOUR WAYS TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS

A. Provide food and rest for those who are physically and emotionally exhausted.

B. Confirm signs of growth to those who are spiritually young.

Also use words that encourage: "I have confidence in you...I'm grateful for you...I see God using you...I'm glad you're in my life...I appreciate you."

C. Share your painful experiences with those going through similar experiences.

Recall those times when you went through difficult times and share it with others going through similar experiences.

Only a beggar can tell another beggar where to find food.

D. Remind Christians of their hope in Christ, that life's difficulties are only temporary.

Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."