

Encourage

Opening Announcements

Opening Prayer

Q: Who has been an encouragement in your life? Why was their encouragement so important?

Q: Is encouragement easy and natural or difficult and you have to be intentional? Why?

READ: Hebrews 10:24-25 "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

Q: In the Greek, the word we use for "encourage" has a sense of being "consoled". What is the context/situation where encouragement is important?

Q: Also in the Greek, it is "consolation" by either verbal or nonverbal means. How might you experience encouragement in difficult situations?

Q: Do you know anyone going through difficult times? What are some "verbal" and "nonverbal" ways you can be an encouragement?

READ: Ephesians 6:21-22 "So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. ²² I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts."

Q: These verses are given at the end of Paul's letter to the Ephesians. If you notice the context of these two verses, they come right after Paul's instructions about spiritual warfare. How might "telling them via this letter" and then sending "Tychicus" be of encouragement to the church in Ephesus?

Q: What characteristics in Paul's encouragement do you see? (ex: intentionality, etc.)

READ: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope."

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¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ ***Therefore encourage one another with these words.***"

Q: What's "encouraging"/Consoling about these words?

Q: What does this passage remind us is our most significant difficulty?

Q: What are some practical ways we can "encourage" one another like this?

READ: Romans 15:4-6 "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, ⁶ that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Q: According to verse 5, what is one of the many characteristics of God?

Q: How does "our" encouragement display HIS encouragement?

Q: Have you ever thought of encouragement as a ministry? Why or why not?

Q: What are some ways you might encourage someone that is in alignment with God's desires and plans?

HOMEWORK:

Find someone who NEEDS encouragement and reach out!