

Are You Being Encouraged?

encourage: to inspire with courage, spirit, or hope

I believe that being encouraged or discouraged can make all the difference when it comes to having a good day or a bad day.

Regardless of the circumstances, this is a factor that can really help determine our attitude. It's so much easier to smile at someone when we're encouraged and in this way, we can be a blessing to others. When I'm discouraged nothing seems to go right, there's very little hope. My whole outlook changes and it's really hard for me to describe how I can be discouraged one day, feeling hopeless, and feeling great the next day, encouraged. Can anyone relate to this? I know there are various reasons that lead me to get discouraged. It could be receiving bad news, conflicts with others, work-related frustration, sin or just a combination of a lot of little things can get me down.

The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life

When I read "[The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life](#)" by [Hannah Whitall Smith](#) she was writing about Joshua after they were defeated at Ai, she wrote **"Up, Sanctify the people" is always God's command.** *"Lie down and be discouraged"* is always Satan's temptation. I think that is very well said, wouldn't you agree? I believe that any thoughts that tempt us to be discouraged are ultimately the work of the devil, but God is in the encouraging business.

When Gideon was first approached by the angel of the Lord at the threshing floor, he needed all the encouragement he could get...

Judges 6: 13 "Sir," Gideon replied, "if the Lord is with us,

why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn't they say, 'The Lord brought us up out of Egypt'? But now the Lord has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites."

Can you relate to Gideon?

I like his honesty. He asks a very direct question and we get a great sense of his frustration here. What was God's response?

16 The Lord said to him, "I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one man."

How is that for encouragement? Does this sound familiar?

Matthew 28: 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Isn't it nice to be reassured by our Creator that He'll always be with us?

I think this is one of those truths that most Christians are familiar with, but it's challenging in our day to day lives to be conscious of it. It's so important to be reminded that He is present and it is only by faith that we can know in our hearts that He is there beside us. For the non-believer, however, they do not have this hope, but we who call on His name have this hope and promise. This hope and promise is what sets us apart, it's what makes us "peculiar people":

Titus 2: 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people,

zealous of good works. (KJV)

It is clearly our duty, as ambassadors for God, to share this hope and encouragement so that others may come to know Him. If we're not encouraged, how can we encourage others?

2 Corinthians 5: 19 For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. 20 So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Read verse 20 again.

Do you think of yourself as Christ's ambassador? That sounds like it comes with incredible responsibility, doesn't it? Well, I think it does. But it is a responsibility that should be a joy and privilege to carry out and if it's not then there's something wrong. After all, the ambassador's manual states clearly how we should be:

Philippians 4: 4 Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! 5 Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon.

I wish I could tell you that I consistently have this joy in the Lord, but I don't. Ever since I started taking Him seriously, reading His Word diligently I have much greater joy and peace. My "secret" is this: I allow God to give me encouragement daily by reading what He's written for me in His Word. If you lack encouragement, [read Psalms 103](#). God's given us enough encouragement in a written format that we can read something different each day for at least a year. I think that was on purpose.

Encourage each other

1 Thessalonians 5: 9 For God chose to save us through our Lord Jesus Christ, not to pour out his anger on us. **10** Christ died for us so that, whether we are dead or alive when he returns, we can live with him forever. **11 So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing. ... 14** Brothers and sisters, we urge you to warn those who are lazy. **Encourage those who are timid.** Take tender care of those who are weak. Be patient with everyone.

2 Corinthians 1: 4 He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

Be an encourager today. Call on a friend or relative that's been on your mind and sow words of life into them. If you don't know what to say, ask God and He'll be certain to give you the words. He's promised.

"Dear Lord, you are the Giver of life and Encourager to us all. Thank you for the wonderful words you've given us. Help us to get to know you more through them. I am confident that the more we know you, the greater we'll be able to encourage others. In Jesus' name, amen."

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