

We need encouragement

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:11

The Bible teaches us to always encourage one another. Many people have accomplished more than they thought they were capable of because someone has encouraged them.

But in many churches, there are more voices of complaints than voices of encouragement. Why? It may be that the church still has to adhere to its mission and continue to seek development in the face of new environments and challenges, but it has no experience and many things need to be adapted and explored, so the pressure is naturally great. When stress is high, demands on others naturally increase and encouragement decreases.

Society is changing rapidly, and the pressure in the future will definitely be no less than it is now. It is not just you who are having a hard time, it is also hard for others. When we are under pressure, we need to encourage each other even more so that we can have the strength to keep running. For the church to move forward, we need three kinds of encouragement.

1. Verbal encouragement

Proverbs 16:24 "Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones."

Look! How powerful are words of encouragement, they can sweeten the heart and heal the bones! There are indeed many difficulties in life, there are indeed many burdens in life, there are many turmoils in interpersonal relationships, and there are many struggles in human nature... All of these things can sometimes make us feel dry inside and feel that there is nothing worth rejoicing about. Even worse, we feel that we are failures. An appropriate and sincere compliment can bring out the buried beauty again, making us feel that there is still hope in life, and giving us the strength to continue to struggle.

2. Encouragement in action

Galatians 6:2 "Bear one another's burdens."

The Bible does not say, "Give advice to one another when each of you has a burden," but it says, "Bear one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." When a person is

burdened or under pressure, it is not enough for you to just stand by and give advice. We need to bear each other's burdens. You have to actually accompany him.

Now is the time to act. The most discouraging thing is to sit there while imperfections are pointed out and nothing is done about it. Whether in church, group, family, company or school, when we see imperfections, those imperfections will not disappear automatically just because you speak them out. We need to take the initiative to do something before the situation can improve. These practical actions are the most important encouragement.

3. God's own encouragement

Encouragement from people is good, but if you only expect encouragement from people, woe to you! On this journey of life, sooner or later you will discover that no matter how much the people around you love and support you, they are only human beings with human weaknesses and limitations. There is no one in the world who can fully satisfy and encourage you. There is no such person. If you ask another person to encourage you in everything all the time, he will sooner or later be unable to bear it, because you have given him a huge burden that he simply cannot bear. Only God can fully understand you and has the power to encourage you at all times and in all situations.

This is why we need to pray for one another. You and I are limited human beings. There are many people whose problems we simply cannot solve. Only God can encourage and help them. If you love them, you will naturally put them into the hands of God who has infinite resources through intercession, allowing God to intervene and turn the situation around! We really need to restore the lesson of intercessory prayer into the life of the group; only then can the group have a breakthrough.

Discussion Questions

1. Who among the people I come into contact with needs my encouragement? Write down their names. These people can be bus drivers, postmen, policemen, security guards downstairs, or colleagues, classmates, family members, pastors, group leaders you are familiar with... What will you do this week to encourage them?
2. Have you encountered something discouraging recently and need encouragement from

others?