

Encourage Always!



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We need to encourage everyone with whom we come in contact as we begin the day—always saying such things like: *What a pleasant day God has given—I trust things are going well with you—always encouraging with a positive statement before asking any questions.*

The apostle followed this plan: Romans 15:5 *“May the God who gives endurance [patience] and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one heart and [mind] you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Barnabas means *“Son of Encouragement,”* Acts 4:36.

Elisha *encouraged* his servant when he was *discouraged* by a serious situation. The prophet had warned the King of Israel of Syria’s aggressive actions—that was why the Syrian king came to capture Elisha. God gave the prophet advance information before Syria could take any action.

2 Kings 6:14 *“Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. 15 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? 16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”*

The prophet gave a memorable reply that echoes through the centuries—something we should say when *encouraging* someone who is going through a serious battle with the devil. *“Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”* We include asking God to open their eyes to see the reality of that verse.

2 Kings 6:17 *“And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”* The servant saw the power of God and saw a *host* from Heaven—they were *not* outnumbered!

We should be ready to *encourage* others because the *encouragement* of the Scriptures and what the Lord has done for us. Our entire life on earth and our endless life in eternity, is founded on the fact that Jesus died on the cross for our sins; that He was in the grave three days; and that He rose to life to give *us* a *new* life. We should *never* be the same again—Galatians 2:20 *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live”*—I live an entirely *new* life from that moment!

We make a choice and we take our stand of faith on the resurrection power of Jesus. If we will do that, then we can encourage others to do that—if they ask us why we believe what we believe; and why we live like we live—by faith in God for everything. It is a life that is so different from the world!

Daniel also encouraged others by his life of faith in God. He wanted to do God’s will no matter what the risk—and to obey God’s Word no matter what persecution he would face, so he requested vegetables in order not to defile himself. His heart was always with Israel, which would *encourage* others to feel the *same*.

His faith was *tested* when an unscriptural law was enacted. Daniel 6:7 *“All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the*

counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.”

Daniel knew that he answered only to the Most High God. He would *do* what God had *commanded* no matter *what* the consequences or pressure to do otherwise. Daniel always stood for what was *right* and he allowed God to *avenge* any *wrong* done to him.

Daniel 6:10 *“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.”*

Not only did Daniel *obey* God and *do* what he knew was the right thing—but he prayed every day to God—and he made sure his *windows* remained open so that everyone would *know* that he was *obeying* God—when everyone else was *obeying* the *king*! Daniel *encouraged* those with him by doing what was right—he *knew* God would take care of the rest.

The consequences for disobeying the unscriptural law was the death penalty. Daniel 6:11 *“These men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.”* Syrian law could not be *changed* once it was *signed*; so, Daniel 6:16 *“They brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.”*

The king was trying to *encourage* Daniel—who took a strong stand for the Lord to control the lions. **When it seemed there was no way—God made a way!** Daniel 6:19 *“The king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.”*

The king still tried to *encourage* Daniel, but the *fear* in his voice, showed the *doubt* in his heart. ²⁰ “*O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?*”

Because of the divine protection God had given him, Daniel was able to make this encouraging reply ²¹, “*O king, live for ever. ²² My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me.*”

Daniel's faith and trust on God enabled him to say: ²² “*My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths.*” It wasn't luck or chance or fate—it was *God* who made a way, when there seemed to *be* no way. Daniel was encouraging the *king* to trust in divine power, just like *he* did when facing imminent danger.

Some may not be so outspoken to a government leader; or not be so bold in stating their faith in God—saying: *I don't want to force my religion on anyone*; and we should not *force* our faith on anyone, but we should *share* our faith with those who want to know. We should *explain* about our *trust* on God when we are given the opportunity.

It is not a matter of forcing something on someone, but it is informing them of something important—the receiving of eternal life. It is only right to tell children about important things, and we always encourage them to do them—like: tie your shoes; brush your teeth; eat the vegetables; look both ways, etc. And we must always tell them of, and encourage them in, spiritual matters.

Deuteronomy 6:6 “*And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children [repeat them again and again], and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind [tie] them as a sign on your hand,*

and [wear them on your forehead]. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Bible examples remind us to *encourage always*—as *did* Mordecai—the story is well-known. ^{Esther 2:17} “*The king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.*”

Haman, the enemy of the Jews, plotted to have the entire nation destroyed—and he almost succeeded, if it were not for God's protection. ^{Esther 4:7} “*Mordecai told [Hatach, the king's official] of all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.*

⁸ “*Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.*”

Mordecai *encouraged* Esther to do the right thing—to which she replies—^{Esther 4:11} “*All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.*” She meant: *It is a death sentence if I do what you suggest.*

Mordecai says in reply ^{Esther 4:13} “*Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. ¹⁴ For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth*

whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

Mordecai knew that even though things looked *bleak* on the surface, and there seemed to *be* no way out of it, God would *make* a way—so he *encouraged* Esther to tell the king of Haman's evil plot to destroy her people. It would be *faith* in God to *save* her people.

His encouragement persuaded the queen to *trust* God for the lives of her people. ^{Esther 4:16} “*Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.*”

Mordecai encouraged Esther to inform the king, even though there was a decided *risk*. To approach the king without being summoned could cost her life, but Mordecai *encouraged* her to trust God to make a way of escape. Therefore, she did what is *right* rather than do what was *safe*.

Esther placed everything on the line, made her request to the king, and all Israel was saved! She *did* what Mordecai *encouraged* her to do—and God was faithful to His promise. ^{Esther 7:10} “*They hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai.*” **To Encourage Always—is always right!**



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PO Box 24283

Philadelphia, PA 19120

info@fcgcchurch.org

#2991 0220 22A