



Midtown Messenger

Volume 2

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Issue 13

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Ronnie Scherffius

In the New Testament we read of a man known as the “Son of Encouragement” (Acts 4:36). Have you ever seriously examined the word encouragement? Webster’s Dictionary defines *encouragement* as “the act of encouraging” or “that which serves to support, promote, or increase confidence.” The word *encourage* comes to us from an Old French word meaning “to hearten.” But look closely at *encouragement*. What is at the “heart” of the word that means “to hearten”? Courage! The word *courage* refers to the “quality of mind which enables one to meet danger and trouble.” But what is at the core of courage? Heart! Our English word *courage* is also from the Old French that literally means *heart*. Thus, after a close examination we learn that in its fullest sense the word encouragement means “to give confidence to,” or “to enable the heart.”

How often have you been downhearted? How many times in life have you faced a situation where you lacked confidence? Do you remember occasions when you began to wonder if you would ever find that light at the end of tunnel? At those crucial times in life how greatly did you appreciate and depend upon the support of family and friends! How important has the encouragement from others been to your life? Why is encouragement so important?

Encouragement is important because it is wanted. No one wants to face the difficulties and challenges in life alone. Everyone **wants** help! From the beginning God purposed that man should not be alone, but determined that man should have help in this life: “And

the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a **help-er comparable to him**” (Gen. 2:18). While this passage is specific to the husband/wife relationship the principle is firmly established that God wants man to have help in facing the day to day challenges everyone faces.

In addition to day to day challenges there are also extreme circumstances where encouragement is wanted. Knowing he was to face the king, Daniel sought encouragement through prayer from his friends: “Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon” (Dan. 2:17-18). The words of Paul clearly reveal how he longed for the encouragement he did not receive in his darkest hour: “At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me” (2 Tim. 4:16). Helpless and alone Paul longed for the presence of a supporter, the words of a comforter, the help of encouragement. Encouragement is important because it is wanted.

Encouragement is important because it is needed. There are times in life that encouragement is more than “a want.” There are things in this life that we want to have. A child may want a puppy or a pony. A man may want a new truck. A woman may want something for her house. None of these things are needs. Life will continue without any difficulties if none of these *wants* are satisfied. But all men need food to eat, water

to drink, and air to breath. If any one of these are taken away life will soon cease to exist! There are times when the spiritual life of our brethren may be dependent upon our encouragement. This is not a sign of a weak faith but of overwhelming circumstances. How many times have we seen good and faithful brothers and sisters fall away after being overwhelmed by sickness, family crisis, or death of a loved one? How many times have we looked back over their situation only to realize that we did not enable their heart to endure — we were not a needed encouragement!

At the close of Acts fifteen we read of that “Son of Encouragement,” Barnabas, who took a young man who stood rejected and cast aside and encouraged him. How differently would Mark’s life have been without that heartening support! Jesus called upon Peter to be a source of strength and encouragement to his brethren in what would become the most overwhelming days of their lives (Lk. 22:32). Encouragement is important because in the most difficult of times it is needed.

Encouragement is important because it is commanded. The saints at Thessalonica endured many challenges to their faith (1 Thess. 1:6; 2 Thess. 2:14). Though Paul longed to be there to comfort and encourage them situations and circumstances hindered him (1 Thess. 2:18). Therefore, Paul admonished the saints to encourage one another: “Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do...Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.” (1 Thess. 5:11, 14)

Jesus will forever be known as Barnabas because he was an encourager! We all know a Barnabas. We all know that one person who is always encouraging; who always seems to find the silver lining in the dark cloud; who finds the positive in the negative; who helps others find good in a bad situation; who enables our hearts. We greatly love and appreciate that person. The truth is, because encouragement is so important — because it is

wanted, needed, and commanded we should all strive to be that person.

Are You The 9 Or The 1?

Sometimes we fall into the terrible habit of ungratefulness. We don’t usually mean to do it, but we do all the same. We pray for help, but then we forget to praise Him after He has. We beg for wisdom, but then forget when He’s helped us with the solution. We cry out to the Lord when we suffer, but then forget Him after the discomfort has eased up. If your gratefulness to God were to be labeled right now, would you be seen as grateful or ungrateful?

In Luke 17, Jesus comes upon 10 men with leprosy (vs. 12). They cried out to Christ, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” (vs. 13). Jesus tells them to go show themselves to the priest, and as they are going, they were healed (vs. 14). Even though all were healed, only one turned back and went to give thanks to Jesus (vs. 15-16). Only one showed his gratefulness.

So when we think about all the answered prayers, all the times God intervened in our lives, all the guidance He has provided, all the protection He’s given to our families, all blessings we have the privilege to enjoy, all the beauty He has surrounded us with, and the thousands of other ways He has helped us, have we shown Him our gratefulness?

Again we ask, if your gratefulness to God had to be labeled, which side would it fall? Would you fall with the 9 ungrateful lepers, or with the 1 grateful leper?

It’s not too late to praise the Lord for His great mercy, love, and kindness (Ephesians 2:4-10).

-Selected-

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE
Week of March 31, 2019

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Bryant Siegel
Scripture Reading: Isaac Jobes

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Lupe Escojido
Fruit of the Vine: Clifton Rutherford
Offering: Don Lynn
Assist: Sammy Scherffius, Kirk FitzSimmons, Brant Jacobs

Sunday Evening: Lupe Escojido, Clifton Rutherford

Prayer

A.M. Closing: Pat Gooch
P.M. Closing: Young Men

Ushers: Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional: Kevin Sheeran

Open/Close Building:

Sound System: Curtis Scherffius

Greeters:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Prepare Communion: Jamison

YOUTH NEWS

Be making plans for F.U.E.L. April 27, 2019! Our theme is: Faith On Which To Stand. The Youth rally is designed for Junior and Senior High School age youth. F.U.E.L. stands for Faith, Understanding, Excellence, and Leadership. The purpose of F.U.E.L is to inform, instruct, and encourage Christian young people and to prepare them for the future by building up their faith in God through a deeper knowledge of the Scriptures.

SPECIAL NOTE:

If you would like to add items to the bulletin, please see Nina Siegel or email :
office.midtownchurch@gmail.com

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Richard Hill, who was in the hospital, but now back at home. Angy Hutt, who's sister, Sally Jacobs, passed away last week.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Apr. 2,9,16,23,30: Men's and Ladies' Bible Classes @ 10 am
April 13: GEMS girls meeting
April 14: Jr./Sr. High Devotional
April 14: Quarterly Men's Business Meeting
April 27: F.U.E.L Youth Rally hosted by MidTown

AREA EVENTS

April 5-6: Young Ladies' Day at University C of C in San Marcos. Flyer is on the bulletin board.
April 6: Ladies Day at Riverside church of Christ.
April 7-10: Portland church of Christ gospel meeting

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Sandy Malone, Parker DeDear, Tri-sha Foerster, Josiah Rodriguez (2); Jeff Cannady (3)

Please sign up to prepare communion, open & close the building, and host youth devotionals for 2019. Sign up sheets are on the bulletin board in the hallway.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Mickey Tisue
Clark Withers

SHUT-INS:

Faye Henderson
Sandy Malone

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Minister: Ronnie Scherffius
Secretary: Nina Siegel

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM
Sunday Evening Worship: 5:00PM
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of March 24, 2019

Bible Class.....	108
A.M. Worship.....	137
P.M. Worship.....	87
Wednesday Bible Study.....	90

Offering \$4,065

THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT

Each week will focus on reading a portion of the New Testament, each reading will only take 30 minutes:

Matthew 1-9



SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli
New Zealand - James & Emily Cammock
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore
Southwest School of Bible Studies - Cody Kilgore

GO PAPERLESS!

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