

**One Anothering
Encourage One Another
1 Thess 5:11**

INTRODUCTION

The One Anothering Commands are NOT About What God wants FROM US, But What He Wants FOR US.

♪ “I get by with a little help ____???” from my friends” ♪

Do you believe it?

If not, do you simply get by all by yourselves?

If you have friends, or others, speaking into your life, what are you hearing?

What are the voices you hear? Are they from “basement people” or “Balcony People” (The Passionate People – Bruce Larson/ Keith Miller

We have two kinds of people in our lives. **There are “basement” people and there are “balcony” people.**

Basement people lurk in the murky waters of your subconscious mind. They are the people who have said things to you, or said things about you, that have wounded you and injured your capacity to be the person that God wants you to be. They are negative, critical and pull you down. They ruin the dreams that you have to do something significant with your life for God.

Have you got some basement people in your life? Is their voice on an audio loop in your head? The voice may sound like Eyore (“Oh bother”), or it may sound like a parent, teacher, or a “well-meaning friend”.

Lucy, from Peanuts cartoon, was often a basement person.

Balcony people are just the opposite. (Heb 12:1) Their goal is our Christlikeness. The apostle Paul was a balcony person. He even said to his disciples, “Follow me as I follow Christ.” Balcony people are the fire-up, positive, upbeat people who see the good in everything and always cheer you on and try to encourage you to be the person that God wants you to be. They build you up and fire you up and speak faith and confidence and trust in God into your life and they give you a vision of doing something more and being more of what God has called you to be.

Are you a basement person or a balcony person to the people in your life?

Series on One Anothering – today “Encourage One Another” – What does it take to ♪ “get by with a little help from my friends”? ♪

IT TAKES ENCOURAGEMENT – 1 Thess 5:11

**1 Thess 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.
18 Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thess 4:18**

Start with 1 Thess 5:11 – There is a bigger context we’ll return to
5:11 = encourage and build up,,,,just as you are doing.

It happens at here at Highlands, and you may not even know it. There may be a word or deed done that is a real encouragement to someone, but you are not aware of it.

When you hear the word Encourage- what comes to mind?

Parakaleo = “to call near; to call for” – many nuances and translations of the word. Jesus will send a paraclete – comforter – noun form of the word.

The same word is used in Heb 3:13; 10:25;

Encouragement is not passive. We don't drift into encouragement.

Heb 3:12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Heb 10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

To encourage is the opposite of forsaking the assembling together. They are presented in contrast to each other.

It Can be translated "encourage, exhort"; comfort, beseech – "beg", plead, help along" are other uses.

The idea of coming alongside and sharing life with others- those in difficult times who need hope, strength.

Encouragement is motivating and vital for our growth. Encouragement is related to the "heart". The word is related to the Latin for heart- "cor", and comes through French "courage"- Coeur (heart) Spanish – "corizon"

To "encourage" is to strengthen ones "heart" – We need courage, or to be encouraged, when our hearts are weak and we want to quit.

The saddest thing in life is that the best thing in it should be courage. [Robert Frost]

It can be a gentle touch or gentle word. Small things can mean so much and you may not even know it.

It doesn't have to be "heroic"

Note the context of 1 Thess - The church had the idea that Jesus would come back soon, then he delayed. And not 20 years out from resurrection and Thessalonian people are confused about those who have passed away.

In that context Paul gives words of encouragement about the return of Christ.

** Each chapter ends with reference to His return. Paul teaches that He will return and encourages them with word that "the dead will live".

It is an encouragement to remember that Jesus is coming back to make everything RIGHT.

If you are worried, confused, frustrated, mad, depressed by the state of the world – TAKE COURAGE – Jesus is coming back.

That is only encouraging for those who know Christ. The One Another passages are good for believers, but if not untied to Christ by faith, then they won't really apply. You can get some benefit by being around the Christian community, but it won't have the same benefit or motivation for you as it does for those who know the grace of God in Christ.

And the idea of Jesus coming back would be a scary thing, if you don't know him. Come to Him today!!

Now go to Acts – End of Chap 4 we meet a great example of a BALCONY PERSON: the "son of encouragement – lit "son of prophecy; exhortation, consolation"- Barnabas – people were suffering and he set the pace in generosity. He sold land and gave the money.

That was encouraging!!

When we see that kind of thing today it is encouraging

Acts 11 – Saul of Tarsus- hated Christians; then meets Jesus on road to Damascus. God has a better job for him – making disciples. He is given aid and support by Barnabas when others are suspicious

11:25, then later Barnabas and Saul head out on first missionary trip.

We see the order of Barnabas and Saul; Barnabas is assumed to be the leader, but he is willing to take a back seat because Saul / Paul becomes the leader. Later references are to Saul and Barnabas.

Some would not take kindly to being put in the back seat, but Barnabas steps back- a sign of an encourager. He doesn't need the spotlight, comes alongside and builds up the other person i.e similar to the Holy Spirit with Christ.

End of chap 15 – ready to go out again after Jerusalem council. Dispute with Saul over John Mark and Barnabas takes John Mark with him. Paul goes with Silas and lose track of Barnabas. Barnabas looks past the mistake and says, “he is worth another try.” Don't we all need that? Barnabas is at work and he salvaged John Mark as well.

Later Paul calls for John Mark because “he is useful to me now.” 2 Tim 4

Since he was the author of gospel of Mark, we have a deep debt of gratitude to Barnabas.

THE PRACTICES OF BALCONY PEOPLE:

1. **Give verbal affirmation to others – IT DOESN'T COST ANYTHING**, and a little goes a long way. In your family, work, ministry, service team, at play, etc be an encourager – IT'S FREE.

It's like manure...it doesn't do any good unless it is spread around.

2. **Affirm people for who they are, not who you want them to be.**

EX: appreciate the strengths and gifts they have, not what you want them to have; i.e. kids, spouse, co-workers, ministry leaders, etc. Don't try to force them into some mold or image that YOU have for them.

3. **Find the best in others and the Providence of God**

A CLUE: the best is knowing that God is still in control.

You don't have to be a fake “Suzy Sunshine” but we do need to have the movement of faith to give thanks in all things. Look for ways to help point people to the truth that God does work all things together for good to those who love Him. – EVEN WHEN WE AREN'T SEEING IT AT THE MOMENT. **Everything this side of Hell is Grace**

4. **Learn to encourage their hearts in God –**

5. **Learn to encourage YOURSELF IN GOD first.**

EX: Oxygen mask on an airplane – Parents put yours on first.

1 Sam 30:4 Then David and the people who were with him lifted their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep. 5 Now David's two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. 6 Moreover David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

- David did not, at first, attempt to encourage anybody else—he encouraged himself. Some of the best talks in the world are those which a man has with himself.

Spurgeon - He who speaks to everybody except himself is a great fool!

Hear David say, “Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope you in God, for I will yet praise Him.” David encouraged himself. But he encouraged himself, “in the Lord his God,” namely, in Yahweh.

We are made in His image; we are made for, by, and through Him.

Beware of encouraging yourself in lesser things – the approval or acceptance of friends, family, or strangers.

The real test of what we worship is where we go to encourage our hearts. Where do we turn to feel good about ourselves? – our spiritual resume? Our record of accomplishments at work, at home, at church, in some sort of competition, in relationships – the number of FB “friends” or “likes” or followers? We may go to something outside of ourselves – food, money, sex, possessions, status, etc.

Whether our trouble is self-induced by our own sin, is caused by others, or is the loving discipline from the hand of God, the ONLY sure refuge for our souls is in God Himself, as He is known through Jesus.

He is the way, the truth, the life; He is the Bread of Life; He is the True Vine, He is the Good Shepherd; He is the Living Water.

Consider Him and keep your eyes on Him so that your heart might be encouraged in the LORD.

6. **Allow others to be YOUR balcony people. – learn to humbly accept affirmation.**

Find yourself encouraging people to be around. We all need that in our lives. Who has done that for you in your life?

We all need to be encouraged in the Lord- look at David- King of Israel, “man after God’s own heart”, etc. He needed it.

Jesus often went to be alone to pray. He encouraged His heart in the presence of God the Father. Tozer – The Pursuit of God

At the heart of the Christian message is God Himself waiting for His redeemed children to push in to conscious awareness of His Presence...

The world is perishing for lack of the knowledge of God and the Church is famishing for want of His Presence. The instant cure of most of our religious ills would be to enter the Presence in spiritual experience, to become suddenly aware that we are in God and that God is in us. This would lift us out of our pitiful narrowness and cause our hearts to be enlarged.

There is a range in NT of encouragement. There are those who have the “gift” of encouragement- it flows out of them. Some of you may have the gift and not know it, but others do.

Then there are the other believers. You don’t have to have the gift to be an encourager – we have the potential because we have the Holy Spirit – paraclete

Keep your eyes and ears open to those who are hurting and in pain. Come alongside, even if you “don’t know what to say”. It’s not the words but the being there to listen. Let them talk, pray with them. Don’t try to fix it or be “Dear Abby”

Prayerfully adopt a **Balcony attitude: “God put someone in my path today, make me aware they are there, and give me the words to say.**

Look for ways to express Encouraging Words and Actions:

The “one less thing” approach – “This is Us” episode 17??

William: Son, you don’t have to make the bed in a motel

Randall: “I like making the bed, and it is one less thing that someone else has to do.”

What a GREAT ATTITUDE.

What if everybody had that attitude- it would be an encouragement to those who come behind you.

Ex: at home – kids- You can encourage your mom or dad by giving them “one less thing” to pick up, clean up, or ask to “shut up” (be quiet).

Ex: at work – Encourage someone at work by leaving ‘one less thing’ for them to do.

The staff and I are encouraged when we come in after Sunday, or some special event and find that things have been put back in place, dishes have been washed, the room (s) have been cleaned. That is ‘one less thing’ for us to have to tackle.

Imagine a community, families, marriages where encouragement is a priority. THAT IS COUNTER CULTURAL.

In this day and age (as in every day and age), one way for the light of Christ to shine bright is for this church to be a community of encouragement – in word and deed.

REMEMBER THE KAIZEN method from last week? Small steps for continual improvement.

Jesus is the ultimate Balcony person, and He has done the Big things that should bring encouragement and comfort to our hearts.

He didn’t leave us “one less thing” to do for our salvation – He left us nothing to do for our salvation.

Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling. Jesus paid it all.

All we bring is our sin. Even the faith by which we trust Christ is a gift from God.

When we know Him, He empowers us to be Balcony people to the glory of God.

What is the one small thing I can do or say today, or this week, to be a Balcony person?

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