

“ENCOURAGEMENT”

2018 Adventure Camp – Maroon Bells – Snowmass Wilderness, Colorado

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Theme of Study: Encouragement

Presented by: Sheldon Monson, Jake Monson, Jon Davis, Bob Walker

Introduction:

“Express Your Faith”

Tell a child, a husband, or an employee that he is stupid or dumb at a certain thing, that he has no gift for it, and that he is doing it all wrong and you have destroyed almost every incentive to try to improve. But use the opposite technique; be liberal with encouragement; make the thing seem easy to do; let the other person know that you have faith in his ability to do it, that he has an undeveloped flair for it – and he will practice until the dawn comes in at the window in order to excel.

Dale Carnegie

A person may not be as good as you tell her she is, but she’ll try harder thereafter. People have a way of becoming what you encourage them to be.

The Bible contains much information about the value of “encouragement.” For instance:

Proverbs 15:23 “A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word *spoken* in due season, how good *it is!*”

Words are powerful – they can build up or destroy. Solomon devoted many of his proverbs to the consequences of speech. Just as foolish words can bring about a person’s own destruction (**Proverbs 14:3**), a wise word can bring joy to all who hear it.

The Apostle James wrote about the destructive power of words in **James 3**.

James 3:2-6: V2 “For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

Perfect – here means “mature.”

V3 Indeed, we put bits in horses’ mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body.

V4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small ruder wherever the pilot desires.

V5 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!

V6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire by hell.”

An uncontrolled *tongue* can defile the *whole body*, or the whole person. *Course of nature* – may also be translated “wheel of life,” meaning “the whole course of life.”

James 3:10-12: V10 “Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

V11 Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening?

V12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.”

James was pointing out the inconsistency of blessing God while cursing our neighbor – who has been created in the image of God with the same incredible human potential we have – to one day be called and born into the God Family.

Pouring salt water into fresh water produces salt water; and mixing bad fruit with good fruit produces a bushel of rotten fruit. Likewise, mixing the contradictory speech of *blessing and cursing* will only produce negative results. We must strive to obey God always! Not just when others are watching. Remember that God is watching always! And what comes out of our mouth is what we are thinking about on the inside.

Matthew 12:33-37: V33 “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by *its* fruit.

V34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

V35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

V36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.

V37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

On this Adventure Trip let’s be sure to encourage one another. When things are difficult friends are there for one another. On the other hand, be careful not to use words that are mean, hurtful, condescending and negative. Any correction should be given in love – and with the other person’s best interest in mind.

Proverbs 25:11 “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.

Proverbs 12:25-26: V25 “Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad.

V26 The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray.”

Anxiety – loses some its force in the face of a positive encouraging *word*. Our *friends* help to determine who we will become. So choose your friends wisely.

“Few things in the world are more powerful than a positive push. A smile. A word of optimism and hope. A ‘you can do it’ when things are tough.”

Richard M. De Vos

“I have yet to find the man, however exalted his station, who did not do better work and put forth greater effort under a spirit of approval than under a spirit of criticism.”

Charles Schwab

Our success as leaders, parents, teachers, and friends is dependent on our ability to create an environment that brings out the best in people.

Whoever you are, wherever you might be, there are talents to be uncovered in people around you. Give encouragement to the talents you see in others. Compliment them, assure them, stimulate them to make the best possible use of their potential abilities.

Ryan Goodson wrote a book entitled: *Basketball Essentials*. It was published in 2016. He has trained players all over the world from the youth level up to the NBA. I has worked with over 20,000 players since 2009, and conducted camps and coaching clinics in 30 states and 6 countries. In his book he talks about how he got his start:

“Back in 2009, I attended a coaching clinic in Orlando, Florida, with world-renowned skill-development coach Ganon Baker. I was a rookie coach, and I was hungry to learn from one of the best. At the time, Ganon traveled all over the world training players. He trained some of the NBS’s best, and he had amazing passion and energy when he taught. This guy was on fire! His enthusiasm at practices was infectious. You could not help but be enthusiastic about the game, and life in general, when Ganon was in the gym. I remember vividly, on the last day of the clinic, Ganon called me over for a private chat. His tone was strong and assertive. He said, ‘Ryan, listen man. I’ve been watching you and you’ve got great potential. I believe that it’s in God’s will that you coach and teach this game. It’s in your blood. It’s in your DNA. You have to do it, and you can be every bit as good as me, or better. You understand?’ After hearing these words from a mentor and someone I held in such high esteem, something changed in me. I wanted to work harder and be more committed...”

“That day, in the conversation, Ganon Baker was a leader. What if you could lead and inspire your players to be their best? What if you could help them apply this skill in their lives to be better players, students, sons or daughters, siblings, or friends? A true leader inspires others to work harder, be better players and people...”

Ryan Goodson, *Basketball Essentials*, Human Kinetics Inc., 2016. p. xiii.

The word *encouragement* means “*to put courage into.*” Encouragement provides the support people need to pursue their dreams and aspirations. It also fuels inspiration needed to face day-to-day challenges.

The Apostle Paul also exhorted us to encourage one another. Especially now – at the time of the end of this age!

Hebrews 10:24-25: V24 “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

Consider – means “to contemplate” or “to have intelligent insight into.” *Love and good works* – need to stirred up; they do not just happen. God’s people can have a tremendous impact on each other. They is why Paul exhorts us to gather together.

V25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Exhorting – means coming alongside and inspiring another with the truth. “As you see the Day *approaching*” – may also be translated “at hand.” Knowing that Christ’s return is imminent, we are to encourage each other even more to remain faithful!

The things we say and do can have a positive impact on others. With God’s help and inspiration we can literally “change lives.” Just one person can make a BIG difference.

“Small Efforts Make A Big Difference”

As the old man walked down a Spanish beach at dawn, he saw ahead of him what he thought to be a dancer. A young man was running across the sand rhythmically, bending down to pick up a stranded starfish and throw it far into the sea. The old man gazed in wonder as the young man again and again threw the small starfish from the sand to the water. The old man approached him and asked why he spent so much energy doing what seemed a waste of time. The young man explained that the stranded starfish would die if left until the morning sun.

“But there must be thousands of miles of beach and millions of starfish. How can your efforts make any difference?”

The young man looked down at the small starfish in his hand and as he threw it to safety in the sea, said, “It makes a difference to this one.”

The Speaker’s Sourcebook, by Glenn Van Ekeren, Anonymous, p. 137.

As Christians we should not grow weary of doing good and helping our fellow brothers and sisters when the opportunity presents itself. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians encourages us not to grow tired of being generous and doing good. Notice:

Galatians 6:7-10: V7 “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

V8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

V9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

V10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

Our Inheritance – Eternal Life in the Family of God!

God has some BIG THINGS is store for us! This should encourage us to press on no matter how difficult things may be.

I Peter 1:3-9: V3 “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

V4 To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

V5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

V6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

V7 That the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Genuineness – As the purity of gold is brought forth by intense heat, so our faith and character are revealed as result of the fiery trials we face. Ultimately the testing of our faith develops the character needed to prepare us to rule in the soon coming Kingdom of God.

V8 Whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

V9 Receiving the end of your faith – the salvation of *your* souls.”

This hope of eternal life, of becoming part of the very Family of God – should encourage and strengthen us! God’s word is saturated with this encouraging message of hope! God is ready and willing to give us the help we need to be successful in our Christian race and endure to the end.

Let’s encourage one another during this Adventure Trip. Let’s be there for one another! Learn to be a positive and encouraging person – like our elder brother Jesus Christ was and is!