

Encouraging Others To Move Forward in Christ #2
The Power of Godly Friendships and Encouraging Words
Proverbs 18:12-13, 21

Why is godly encouragement so important in counseling, discipleship, and spiritual maturity?

Do I believe the majority of hurting/stuck people mostly need a "professional" or a godly friend who proclaims the Good News of Jesus Christ?

Luke 14:26-27 - "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

I. "Godly Encouragement"- Walking with others in order to stimulate Christ-likeness.

1 Thessalonians 2:8 - "Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us."

~ Discipleship - A relational investment for an extended period of time that aims for spiritual maturity in Christ and ongoing multiplication.

1 Corinthians 13:13 - "But now faith, hope, and love remain...but the greatest of these is love."

~ Faith - Trusting in Christ and His Word which produces obedience to Him.

John 10:27 - Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

~ Hope - A confident expectation in God and His word.

Psalm 42:5 – “Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the (deliverance) of His presence.”

~Love – Affection toward another person which leads me to do what is best for him.

Matthew 22:37 - Jesus said ...“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind....and love your neighbor as yourself.”

II. Basic Truths to Consider

1. God is the Ultimate Encourager.

John 14:26 - “The **Helper**, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

~ “Parakletos” – One who walks along side of another, exhorts, comforts, intercedes, admonishes, consoles, encourages and strengthens so that we would experience His glory and love.

2. Godly Encouragement is an expression that motivates someone to keep moving forward in trusting Christ and also growing in Christ-likeness.
3. People are struggling with sin, anger, fear, wounds, attacks, and insecurities more deeply than we know. Therefore, they need a community of faith like the Trinity.
4. Becoming an instrument in God’s hand for stimulating others to keep moving forward in Christ is a supernatural work that comes from living in the truth and relying on the Spirit.

John 8:31 - “So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.’ ”

Galatians 5:16 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”

III. The Characteristics of Godly Encouraging Friendships and Life Giving Words Proverbs 18:12-13, 21 Page #656

1. Compassion openly expressed through listening and life-giving words.

Proverbs 20:5

Proverbs 10:11, 19

Proverbs 12:18

~Reflect - Say back what we hear.

~Clarify - Ask questions to learn more.

~Explore - Go deeper in the why and what. (Faith, Hope, and Love)

~Point to Jesus - Address the heart with God and His promises.

2. Commitment to being redemptive with sins and failures.

Proverbs 17:9

3. Candid and loving in confrontation.

Proverbs 27:5-6

Proverbs 24:26

~ Every Christian needs not to be asking, "*Will my friends keep my continual sins confidential,*" but rather "*How am I to keep moving forward in Christ, have genuine Christ-like community and also mature in my testimony of Christ?*"

4. Consistency in godly encouragement toward Christ-likeness.

Proverbs 27:17

Proverbs 18:24

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Faith Sheet

Transformation Verse (October) - *A friend loves at all times... Proverbs 17:17*

Main Points: Godly encouragement is focused upon stimulating one another toward Christ-likeness. As we mature in faith, hope, and love, the Lord will use us as His instruments of healing and impact. Our words are to be truthful, kind, and healing even when we lovingly confront one another.

#1- Reviewing this Past Sunday
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1. Read Proverbs 18:12-13. Discuss Sunday's message with someone.
2. How are you doing in using your friendships and words as encouragement and motivation toward "increased godliness"?
3. What are the dangers and disappointments of continual "shallow, insincere, and worthless" words?
4. What are the results of "death words" and what are some examples?
5. What are the benefits of "life words", and what are some examples you could use in your relationships?

2- Preparing for Next Sunday
Encouraging Others to Move Forward in Christ #3
Caring Enough to Encourage and Confront Layers
Genesis 3:1

1. Read Galatians 6:1 and Prov. 12:18. Discuss why these two Scriptures are important to remember as we move out in faith to lovingly confront others sins and layers.
2. A "Layer" is what we do or do not do in order to protect us from exposure and to avoid what we fear. Layers therefore prevent us from moving forward in Christ and also enjoying deep relationships. What common layers or strategies do you see in your life and in others' lives that are used to protect our image and ourselves? (tough guy, class clown, etc.)

3. John Powell says in his book, *Why Am I Afraid to Love?* – “*When you repress or suppress those things which you don’t want to live with, you don’t really solve the problem because you don’t bury the problem dead – you bury it alive. It remains alive and active inside of you.*” Why is this so problematic for individuals, families, and churches?
4. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:8. Discuss what characteristics are crucial in motivating others to keep moving forward in Christ.