

# A Heart of Encouragement

Did you know that smiles are contagious? Today we talk about having a heart of encouragement.

## Introduction

Something many of you may not know is that the preaching and teaching team here at Cell Life Church is bi-vocational. That means we all work outside of the church in the community besides our duties with the church.

We do this on purpose. It makes it so the maximum amount of money that is donated goes straight to serving people around the world in the name of Jesus Christ. It also allows us to serve and minister to people in their everyday lives and encourage them. That is what we are all supposed to be doing.

Today we want to encourage you by talking about the power of encouragement.

I try to always be encouraging. I lead with grace, forgiveness, and encouragement as much as possible, and like I said in the beginning, smiles are contagious and I think being encouraging is too.

The Bible talks a lot about encouragement. Encouragement goes hand in hand with love. We want to talk about three facets of encouragement today. We want to talk about believers encouraging believers, believers encouraging others, and what the results of these are.

We first want to talk about believers encouraging believers. That is, followers of Jesus encouraging each other.

## Believers Encouraging Other Believers

There are many elements of believers encouraging each other and they are outlined in 2 Corinthians 13:11.

### 2 Corinthians 13:11

(11) Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

Paul is ending his second letter to the church in Corinth and he wants to leave them on a high note. He wants them to dwell on something encouraging, so he encourages them.

First, he tells them to rejoice. It's pretty easy to rejoice when things are going well. You've got a job, you're healthy, and your kids are doing well in school and keeping their rooms clean. People are happy to see you. But that's not always how it is, is it? Not everything is going to be going perfectly in our lives all the time. But Paul tells us to rejoice always.

When we lose our job or get sick, rejoice. When things aren't going our way or we do not have enough money to pay our bills, rejoice. Rejoice about what, you say? You are still alive and able to serve the Lord. You are still able to share the love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ with those around you and be a witness of all that is good and holy.



Paul tells us to seek unity. In other words, don't dwell on what divides us. Celebrate and work within what unites us. Take the time to think about what you are going to say or do and how you are going to say it or do it so you are not divisive.

We are to be of one mind. As a body of believers, the Church, and Jesus' followers, we must be of one mind. We must focus on what will further the kingdom of God in peace and love. We must focus on what we agree on and move in that direction.

Arguing about things usually does no good. Encourage one another by being of one mind with Christ and therefore one mind with one another.

And finally, live in peace. This isn't only living in peace with where we are in life and circumstance, but living in peace with others. Not being argumentative or stubborn, but being loving, forgiving, and helpful. Having a heart of encouragement and doing these things will cause the body of believers to grow and be healthier spiritually. You can't help but be encouraged when those around you are living by these principles.

These are all also great examples to the world.

### Believers Encouraging the World

This is the second way to be encouraging. First, we are encouraging to other believers, or members of the body of Christ then we are encouraging those around us who may not be believers, we encourage the world. This is a great way to show love and good deeds to others outside the body.

Let's read Hebrews 10:23-25

#### Hebrews 10:23-25

(23) Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. (24) And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, (25) not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Paul is instructing us to encourage one another by showing love and good deeds to one another. But think about what would happen if we showed love to the people in our sphere of influence. That is our family, our workplace, our school, and our community.

When we show love and encourage those around us that do not know Jesus, we become the face of Jesus to them. This allows us to pray for them and lift their spirits. They will see that we have something that they don't have, Jesus. This leads to questions and maybe even pointing them to Jesus!

As we love and encourage our local world it can lead to doing things that will show our love and compassion for our region and our nation. You don't need to know someone to love them or encourage them. You don't need to be face-to-face with them to bless them. This is how we will change the world church. By loving the people we come in contact with and not being discouraging, but having a heart of encouragement in the name of Jesus Christ.



## A Heart of Encouragement Produces Results

Encouraging one another multiplies and causes more encouragement everywhere.

Let's read 1 Thessalonians 5:11

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(11) Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Like we opened with, encouragement, like a smile, is contagious. Encouragement can spread and grow faster than gossip or a rumor when it is sincere.

We all want to be around encouraging people. We all want to feel loved and encouraged. Typically the only people who do not want to be around encouraging people are people who prefer to gossip and spread rumors. The two cannot happen in the same place.

We can truly change our world by having a heart of encouragement. Each time you sincerely smile at someone they will smile back. You may not know them, but you had a positive effect on their life, even if it was just for a moment. That person can then see someone and encourage them.

Earlier we said that we work regular jobs outside our duties here at Cell Life Church. This allows us to spread love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness to people that we would never interact with if we waited for them to come to us in the church. We have shared smiles and sincere words of encouragement with young and old alike.

The closer you get to Jesus and spend more time with him the more encouraging you will become. Jesus will give you a heart of encouragement to use and share in this world. He will shine through you and draw people to you. Don't waste this. Allow Jesus to encourage others through you.

### Conclusion

It is difficult to be angry or depressed when you are surrounded by encouragement. So, encourage one another. Look for the positive in things. I know I much prefer to encourage and be encouraged. It is usually wrapped in a smile with sincerity behind it.

Friends, Jesus encouraged everyone who sincerely wanted to know him and follow him. He then tried to encourage others around him. Not everyone wanted to be encouraged, and not everyone followed him. That is their choice.

Today not everyone follows Jesus, yet Jesus is still standing there asking all to follow him. Some do not follow Jesus or have turned away from him because the church hasn't been encouraging.

Church, let's stop arguing, gossiping, and back-biting and start encouraging one another and experience a heart of encouragement.

