

My Thought of Week – Encouragement - Not Just a Suggestion! (Week: 20180306) By Jim Fannin

Be an Encourager!

More people than you realize are discouraged or hurting and dealing with difficult problems. Jobs create stress. Children are difficult to manage. Friends disappoint. Money problems arise. Sometimes things just don't go right! It is easy to become discouraged. How can you help? Consider the following:

Everyone needs a little encouragement! And you should be that encourager! You might ask, "Why?"

There are seven reasons you should be the "Encourager."

First, God through His inspired Word to His chosen prophets and apostles, **directs** that we do so. Here are just a few scriptures that direct us to be encouragers: (<http://www.lockman.org> NASB[®]):

Is 35:3 **Encourage** the exhausted and strengthen the feeble.

1 Thess 5:11 Therefore **encourage** one another and **build up one another**, just as you also are doing.

1 Thess 5:14 We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, **encourage** the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

Heb 3:13 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.

Second, a word of encouragement can help someone deal with the problems they face. As suggested in Hebrews, your word of encouragement will **help** them **resist** falling into sin as a result of their struggles

Third, through your word of encouragement, you are showing God's love and concern for them. This act of compassion builds **positive feelings** and eventually, **positive relationships** with those you encourage. And we know positive relationships are **always beneficial** whether they are in the work place, home, church or a social setting.

Fourth, it offers a way to subtly let people know of your Christian faith in situations where it is unsuitable, or you may feel you cannot speak freely. This can be especially effective in a work or social situation.

Fifth, it will eventually earn you the right, and offer you the opportunity to witness to those who are lost, ... **or** to be of service to a fellow Christian, in other words, you will be displaying the "**Mark of the Christian**" (see Thought for the Week 20180228). Most people simply will not listen to you until you have their confidence and trust. Offering words of encouragement is one way to help build that confidence and trust.

Sixth, it makes you **feel good**. That is **just one** of the **blessings** God gives us for being obedient to His Word. Have you ever noticed how you always feel better after you have done something to help someone in their time of need?

Seventh, **obedience** to God's word not only **improves** our relationship with God but is **always pleasing** to Him. As a Christian, knowing that you are doing something that pleases God brings its own special blessings and joy.

So, encourage someone every day! See you next week! Jim Fannin